

THE
BEGGAR GIRL

AND
Her Benefactors.

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AND

Her Benefactors.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BENNETT,

AUTHOR OF *WELCH HEIRESS*, *JUVENILE INDISCRETIONS*, *AGNES DE-COURCI*,
AND *ELLEN COUNTESS OF CASTLE HOWELL*.

—●●●●—

A poem, a drama, a novel, which represents virtue in lively colours, models the reader on the virtuous characters, who act without his perceiving it; they become interesting, and the author inculcates morality without seeming to mention it.

LE MERCIER.

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TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE
DUCHESS OF YORK.

MADAM,

IN presuming to inscribe a production so humble as the *Beggar and her Benefactors* to your ROYAL HIGHNESS, I am anxious to prove myself not actuated either by vanity or self-interest.

The

The amiable woman, whose virtues I would hold up to the little world, may probably never read a line of the Beggar, as I have not bound her in Morocco, to solicit either a *douceur* or a place in the Royal Library.

I have happened to reside some time in the neighbourhood of that retreat, where, while the mad world of fashion are rapidly destroying their fortunes, honour and character, the Duchess of York, escaping the general contagion, avoided the public eye, and lived,
while

while her Royal husband was employed in the defence of his country abroad, as well as since his return, in the active practice of every female endearing private virtue.

I have traced the morning, noon and evening of her guiltless days ; the occupations, amusements and connexions of her delicate mind, which God himself might witness, and approve *as good*.

I have heard her eulogium from the high, and her blessings from the low.

I have seen infants crowd into the road, to give the lisping information to each other, when the good Duchess of York was coming by.

I have followed her to the humble roof, where sickness and penury groaned; and I have seen her modest dignity adorn a Court.

I have met her, where the whole host of Faro, and all the train of unblushing fashion would faint—even in the plain vault, where, when life's fitful fever

fever is over, the soul, distinguished only by its virtue, shall leave her pure clay to moulder into common dust;— even there has the eye of observation followed the daughter of a King.

In a private sepulchre, far from the pomp of Royalty, built under her own directions in a country church, the young and amiable Duchess of York was heard to give particular orders for the future disposition of her own coffin, in a voice so firm, and in a manner so collected, as proved, that she who knows how

how to distinguish between the use and abuse of the blessings she possesses, always remembers, that to live without guilt, is to die without fear.

Having actually witnessed such living excellence, it is a principle superior to vanity or interest, which impels the Author of the *Beggar* to respect in the *Princess*, the virtues of the *woman*; and to honour high rank, by selecting from it an example so perfect, for the imitation and respect of that younger part of the Female World who are supposed to be the support of Novel Writers.

In

In the most ardent hope that the
Duchess of York may long enjoy the
blessings she so eminently deserves,

I have the honour to remain,

Madam,

Your Royal Highness's

Most respectful and devoted servant,

THE AUTHOR.

[vii]

In the most ardent hope that the

Diocese of York may long enjoy the

pleasure of its eminently beloved

I leave the honour to remain,

Madam,

5 JA 59

Most respectful and devoted servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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THE
BEGGAR GIRL.

CHAP. I.

*Shewing how, give some folks an inch, they will take
an ell; and how great bodies may
manage little ones.*

ONE mild spring morning, in the year of
our Lord one thousand seven hundred
and whatever the reader pleases, a tall,
thin, disagreeable, sickly looking person, then
resident at a small village in Surrey, rang for
his servant, to attend him on a promenade he

was in the custom of taking under the south wall of an adjacent park.

Descending the white steps from his house, his irritable temper was set in a flame, by the appearance of a little female mendicant, who neither standing, lying, sitting, or kneeling, contrived so to impede his steps, that it was impossible for him to pass, without her changing her posture, or being trod on.

“Get out of my way, you little Jezebel,” said he. “This creature, (turning to his servant, who followed him) is more plague to me than the cursed ague that has tormented me the whole winter.”

From a small feeble voice now issued,—
“One halfpenny, your good honour, to buy a bit of bread.”

“Bread, you jade! you devour more bread than any three ploughmen in the parish, if you lay out all you get from me, in bread. Get out of my way!”

“Oh, pray, your honour,” cried the beggar girl, getting off the step, “give me one

one halfpenny, I am very hungry, and my mammy will beat me if you don't."

"Your mammy is a drunken huffy, and you will be like her; begone I tell you; if I catch you near my house again, tell your mammy, I'll have her whipped, with you tied to her back, from parish to parish, like vagabonds as you are; d—n my heart if I don't."

When by any extraordinary chance it so happened, that Col. Buhanun uttered a harsh expression, he was in the precise situation of many of those smart clever beings of the higher order, who conscious that the asseverations, promises, professions, and threats which interest, appetite, caprice, or resentment tempt them to usher into an incredulous world, are all in the yahoo style of saying the thing that is not, fancy a round oath, fiercely delivered, will enforce belief, and inspire confidence; and the greater indeed in these cases the fiction, the more tremendous the oath. The least harshness from Col. Buhanun was really fiction; and although we shall not have many occasions to find

out similarities between him and the before-said higher order of clever, smart beings, yet in instances like these, when feeling and judgment were at variance, the Colonel was under the necessity of blunting the one, and acceding to the other by an hearty oath.

Col. Buhann had a weak habit of making the distress of every human being his own; and a certain defect of utterance, which ever accompanied his sympathetic feelings, when judgment retreated from imposition, rendered auxiliaries of some kind absolutely necessary. If indeed the Colonel could have temporised with the unfortunate tremor on his voice, by assuming a stern, decisive countenance, the oath might have been sometimes spared; but though his mind was endowed with every attribute of true heroism, — though he feared nothing in heaven or on earth, but him that created both, he was subject to another unfortunate defect, as hostile to terrific looks, as the tremor on his voice to harsh utterance: This was a swimming fluid, which often sprang involuntarily to his eyes, and at this moment prevented his looking directly

directly at the little object, who, with her mammy, he devoutly damned his heart if he would not have whipped from parish to parish.

Whether it were that this threat had been too often repeated;—whether the little beggar possessed an incorrigible degree of boldness;—or whether, under the excellent tutorage of her mammy, she had already learned, that a threat uttered with swimming eyes, in broken sentences, was far less dreadful than returning to cold and famine, without means to alleviate either, we will not say; but certain it is, that notwithstanding the Colonel continued not only to threaten, but to swear he would severely punish both mother and child, the little ragged petitioner continued to follow his long strides, as fast as chilblains on every toe, kibed heels, large shoes tied on with dirty lilt, tattered petticoat, and part of an old red cloak half a yard longer than her self would permit, still repeating, in a soft plaintive tone, “One halfpenny for God’s sake, to buy me a bit of bread.”

"A halfpenny! well," said the Colonel, half turning, "give her a halfpenny, John."

John obeyed without speaking.

The little beggar looked at the halfpenny; a faint flush coloured her pallid cheek; tears filled her eyes.

"Well," said the Colonel, "and why don't you carry the money to your mammy?"

"This is not a *white* halfpenny; mammy bid me get a *white* halfpenny."

"Ah ha! do you hear the little brat? I'll give you no more white money."

"Don't put his honour in a passion," said John.

The Colonel and his man John walked on; the beggar still followed in silence, 'drinking her own salt tears' at every step; when they were met by a middle-aged man, in fleecy hosiery wig, gloves, and stockings; a warm furtout; his neck wrapped in thick silk handkerchiefs, and his rosy countenance fenced from the keen north wind by an enormous white hat.

This

This gentleman was one of those fortunate mortals on whom the Almighty, for ends inscrutable to mortal ken, showered down innumerable blessings : To his immense riches were added almost every enviable concomitant to worldly happiness ; and he was equally renowned for health, strength, and saving knowledge. He could look proudly round ; few objects met his eye in the vicinity of the small village of Penry, in which he had not interest, or over whom he had not power ; and his boast of the one, and exertion of the other, were undisturbed by the impertinence of a single intrusive recollection, that for an accumulation of blessings so uncommon, a little was on his part due to the beneficent Being from whom he received so much. He had observed the perseverance of the little beggar, and joined the Colonel just as his patience was expiring.

“ Good-morrow, Colonel,” said Sir Soloman Mushroom ; “ I hope I have the pleasure to see you well this morning.”

B 4

“ No

“No, Sir, I never was worse. You see that creeping bundle of filth sweeping the path with rags after me.”

Sir Solomon smiled; he had joined his good neighbour, for the exprefs purpose of giving him both information and advice. “Give me leave to assure you, my good Sir,” said he; “your indiscriminate charity subjects *you* to imposition, and is of real injury to the *neighbourhood*: All the lazy and idle in the parish, who will half starve rather than work, find an easy road to your purse, and——”

As Colonel Buhanun wanted penetration to discover how the road to his purse, be it ever so easy or much frequented, could injure any person but himself; his eyes were more than usually expanded, quite free from the troublesome rheum that had so lately affected them, and he uttered, “Well, Sir!!” in an accent free from tremor.

Sir Solomon proceeded. “And this, my good Sir, in a parish already over-burthened with poor, is as I before said, a public injury; I am sorry—I am grieved.”

Sir

Sir Solomon did not swear; he could speak sufficiently stentorial; he could make himself heard from one end of the village to the other; and though he had no tremor on his own nerves, could at any time affright those of his humble neighbours who had, without the aid of oaths, which to be sure, would have been highly indecorous in him to use, inasmuch as he was a justice of the peace, and so great an advocate for morality, that he was in the constant habit of *encouraging*, as well as *receiving informations*, against such of the simple villagers, as did sometimes over their ale, take licence to imitate their betters; if however, when the tongue speaks what the look denies, an oath was ever necessary to enforce belief, it was in this instance, for no man ever carried the evidence of less sorrow, or less grief in his countenance, than Sir Solomon Mushroom, when he repeated, I am sorry and grieved to say, charity, noble and unbounded like yours, is in most instances a signal for imposition, and *ecce homo*.

An elderly man passed, bowing to both gentlemen.

"That fellow," continued Sir Solomon, "is one of your pensioners; look at him; does he appear to be an object of charity?"

So smooth and forcible was Sir Solomon's speech, that the Colonel, as his eye followed the firm step of the man, whose appearance was really decent, felt a momentary mortification in recollecting, he actually had allowed that identical decent clad person, a weekly pension during the last severe frost. He turned his head round, and directed a kind of side glance to his man John. It was not a glance of anger or reproach, but a sort of interrogative glance, which said, how is this? why have I acted so unwise? John advanced, putting the back of his right hand to his hat; a mode of respect he could not break himself of, although continually reminded by his master of his brown coat. "Please your honour," said John, "he has a large family." "All able to work, honest John," said Sir Solomon, in a positive tone of voice.

"His

"His wife, your honour, lay in, in the middle of the frost, and he is subject to fits."

"Good John, (Sir Solomon now both lowered and softened his voice) I love thee for thy humanity; but I know the fellow; he has no fits but drunken ones."

John bowed and fell back to his station behind his master.

"But," said the Colonel, willing to palliate the injury his charity had done the neighbourhood, "it has been a very hard winter, and they tell me people of his trade can't work in frosty weather."

"A hard winter! there again," quoth the wife Sir Solomon; "why don't such fellows lay up in summer against the hardness of the winter? Ah Colonel! if *you* and *I* had not been more provident, *we* should not now have it in our power to be *charitable*."

The little acquaintance subsisting between Colonel Buhanun and Sir Solomon Mushroom, was the result of advances all on one side; no man living had less curiosity respecting others, or less desire to increase the very small number of his friends than the

Colonel; and no man in the world a more insatiable desire to know every particular concerning all the rich men in his neighbourhood, and to add them to the list of his numerous acquaintance, than Sir Solomon.

But notwithstanding the reserved turn of the former, and the great privileges, which, as being lord of the manor of Penry, a Colonel in the militia, one of his majesties justices of the peace, member of parliament; and above all, the richest man within twenty miles round was assumed by the latter; notwithstanding there were very few inhabitants of the village of Penry, whom fear or interest had not rendered blind and dumb, in respect to the disposition of the great man; something like character had reached John, and through him his master, that rendered the conjunctive part of Sir Solomon's last speech rather unpleasant: The *you* and *I*, with the concluding inference, did not rest quite easy on the mind of the Colonel; it was not, however, wholly inapplicable, as both the gentlemen had commenced the career of life, totally free from the burthen of any of the good things that
blunt

blunt the edge of industry ; and as to family, Sir Solomon Mushroom might, if he pleased, claim great precedence in that respect ; for Col. Buhanun's descent was only from a Scotch Laird, whas gude blede and stract entagrite was aimaißt hes aw, and wha having leetle else of warldly estimation, tuke especial care tul pre-farve aw the documents of hes alliance to every noble famely in North Breeton : where-as the parentage of Sir Solomon Mushroom, was either too high, or too low, to be traced at all, with any degree of certainty ; he was therefore at full liberty to ascribe his origin to the first branch of the numerous family of the Mushrooms in England, Ireland, Scotland, or his majesty's town of Berwick on Tweed,—of which liberty he was by no means sparing.

“ And then,” continued Sir Solomon, after a pause, “ you see a second instance of depraved cunning in this young beggar : her mother and herself are casualties here ; yet out of respect to a gentleman in the village, who on account of some former knowledge of her or her connexions, allowed her a small weekly pension

pension, no corporeal punishment has hitherto been inflicted on them; although they have been several times cloathed, and sent from the parish on promise of never returning; but I am resolved, cost what it will——”

Sir Solomon was proceeding with no small degree of fermentation both in his looks and voice, when he was suddenly interrupted by the Colonel's servant, who advanced in a quick march to an exact level with him, then having clapped the back of his right hand to the left angle of his cocked hat, he whispered in the ear of the knight:

“No ceremony that to great ones' long;

“Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,

“The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,

“Become them with one half so good a grace

“As mercy does.”

John then dropped his hand and fell back.

The knight's surprise had actually carried him off the foot path, and as great a stranger to the author of the quotation as the divine quality so beautifully delineated; after a long and astonished gaze he returned to the path and

and half turning to the servant, asked, if he was a methodist.

"A methodist, your honour! what is that?"

"One who talks about what he does not understand, as thou dost."

"Then please your honour, I am no methodist; I am only a man."

Whether Sir Solomon recollected how much beneath his dignity it was to talk to a fellow, who, from his own report, was only a man; whether the matter or manner of the interruption had any thing in it particularly obnoxious; whether—but the why or wherefore does not signify,—he looked so angry, and spoke so loud, that the little beggar, who still dragged her rags after the Colonel, made an involuntary stop.

"The old huffy has found you out; she sets the young one to watch; you are incessantly worried by her cry for bread; you see a loathsome object, and give money to get rid of her. Well, let us see what good end this charity answers: It supplies the abominable mother with means to get intoxicated,
and

and abuse the whole village. She administers, at your cost, a small portion of spirits to the girl, who, by help of this slow poison, gets the sickly look that is a tax on the feelings of those she is taught to follow with infant supplications."

Sir Solomon Mushroom could talk;—Gods! how he could talk;—the whole British senate had often been, as the Colonel now was, run down by his volubility; they had been confounded at his mixture of sense, folly, truth, and falsehood, and astonished at the undaunted perseverance of this distinguished orator, who now perceiving the advantage he had gained, turned himself round, so as to front, not only the champion of mercy, but the object against whom his heart was shut, and bawling with an authoritative tone of voice, demanded how many drams her mother had drank that morning?

The child lost in an instant all trait of incorrigibility; her little face betrayed, through the dirt that covered it, every symptom of fear; she turned with as much haste, but less power, than the stern enquirer; her large shoes

shoes got entangled in the long piece of a cloak, and she fell on her face with such force against a stone that the blood gushed from her nose, mouth, and ears on the path.

The Colonel, on seeing the blood, exclaimed, looking interrogatively at his man, "What has she done now?"

John looked piteously, but spoke not.

"Shall we cross, Colonel?" said Sir Solomon; "the gravel is more dry on the other side."

Instead of crossing the Colonel faced about; John mechanically did the same.

The mendicant had in the mean time risen, and glancing her flowing eye at the object of her terror, attempted to fly,—it was but an attempt,—having got on a few tottering steps, she sunk in the midst of her rags, without motion, and John no longer waited for orders.

"Very fine, Miss," said Sir Solomon; "very fine! ay, ay, you jade, you are well taught; you have all your tricks."

"Tricks, Sir," said John, raising her up with one hand, and drawing the back of the other

other across his eyes : " here are no tricks, the poor child is dead."

" So much the better," said Sir Solomon.

" God forbid !" solemnly ejaculated the Colonel.

Just then a chariot, in which a lusty elderly woman, in whose large forbidding eyes, and strong features no trait of feminine weakness was ever seen, sat by the side of a middle aged man, whose pallid countenance, on the contrary, betrayed nothing else. As if afraid the wind would totally demolish his weak frame, he scarce dropped the glass long enough to answer Sir Solomon's " How d'ye, Doctor Croak ?" with three hems to clear his utterance, and " I hope you are well, Sir Solomon ?" before it was drawn close again, and the chariot going on.

The Colonel, had by this time joined his man and the little beggar ; and perceiving, notwithstanding the latter's decided declaration, that, " the poor child was dead," signs of existence, though nearly suffocated by the blood that had filled her mouth and throat, on hearing the appellation of Doctor,

bid

bid the coachman stop, and desired the master to alight.

Doctor Croak pulled the check, and put his glass to his eye; he saw the child; nor was it truth to say, the first time by many he had seen her; he saw too, by her appearance, some accident had happened; he supposed curiosity had attracted the Colonel, whose person he also knew; but, from that sort of curiosity that lead people into an obligation to assist the unfortunate, both the Doctor and his companion were wholly free.

“What are you spying at, Doctor?” said the Colonel; “alight and give your assistance to this poor child.”

The Doctor's companion pulled his sleeve, and gave her head a toss; he was in the habit of comprehending all the dumb motions of this lady; he hemmed twice louder than common, and answered, that he never attended paupers.

John, well acquainted with every chord that vibrated on the Colonel's heart, read disappointment in his looks.

“Please

"Please your honour," said he, "a Doctor, that is, if he be a right Doctor, is obliged to assist all."

"Who can pay for assistance, friend John," interrupted Sir Solomon; "the Doctor's chariot wheels do not roll by attending such patients as these;" and Sir Solomon winked at his friend the Doctor.

"Please your honour," replied John, a little disconcerted, "God will pay him, if this poor child cannot."

"No doubt," answered the Knight, with a second wink; "but that is rather giving too long credit, hay, Doctor?"

"Sir," interrupted the Colonel, sternly, "he shall have prompt payment. John, go and——"

The servant knew the purport, and therefore did not wait the finish of his master's sentence. He was opening the door of the carriage, but the Doctor begged to be excused; he hemmed, complained of gouty symptoms, and could not bear the air.

"Well,"

“ Well,” said John, “ if the mountain will not go to Mahomet, Mahomet must be brought to the mountain ; I will bring the child to the carriage.”

The Doctor’s companion shrieked, and began to gather in her flounces. “ Bring her here ! do if you dare, fellow ; what do you [mean with your Momets and mountain ;—how dare you, Sir, take such liberties with me ?”

The Doctor, as we have said, comprehended the lady’s dumb motions, and he was quite as familiar with all the mild movements of the mind that gave shrillness to her tongue ; he, therefore, to end her agitation for the present, got out, and hobbled to the place, where the Colonel, had, by the aid of his cambric handkerchief, and a running stream, cleared the dirt and blood from the beggar’s face.

“ This poor child has had a bad accident, Doctor.”

The chief ornament of Dr. Croak’s eloquence, like that of his great predecessor, the renowned Dr. Pantofles, was hem.

“ He

"He—hem,—yes, Sir."

"Poor little animal, I thought it had been quite gone."

"He—hem,—yes, Sir."

"You see what a quantity of blood she has lost."

"He—hem,—yes, Sir."

"I don't think she has any bones broke."

"He—hem,—no, Sir."

"I wish you would examine her head; I am afraid of a fracture. Give me a knife, John; cut this string; do examine it, Doctor."

"He—hem,—yes, Sir."

The 'He hem, yes, Sir,' not being followed by any movement of his body, preparatory to such examination, the Colonel became rather impatient, and repeating his request in a voice that grated on the ears of the Doctor, his yellow phiz turned to a sort of cream coloured white, and he trembled every limb.

"The gout," said the Colonel; "why, Doctor, you have got an ague."

"He—

"He—hem—ye—yes, Sir," replied the Doctor; and drawing on his beaver gloves, he proceeded to remove the matted locks of the little beggar, and after a few moments pronounced his belief that there was no fracture.

"Believe!" repeated the Colonel; "if you only believe, take a little more time—remove her rags, and examine her again."

That the Doctor would most readily do, but really she was in such a filthy condition, she turned him sick.

This declaration, after a tremulous hem, issuing through two black rows of half-teeth, from lungs whose noxious vapour appeared to have blasted the natural hue of his parched blue and brown lips, ill accorded with the Colonel's humanity, who, at the same moment that he shot a glance of contempt into his soul, by slipping a couple of guineas into his hand, got over all difficulties; and the child recovering, John took her in his arms, and went on, followed by the Colonel, Sir Plausible Mushroom, and Doctor Croak; the lady and the chariot, keeping their pace.

During

During the very short walk to the village, Doctor Croak gave the Colonel so many anecdotes of the wickness of the little beggar and her mother, that for the first time in his life he blushed at the retrospect of an act of his own : It was not that the plausibility of one of his present companions, nor the very exact memory of the other, had power to change a iota of his sentiments, had these not accorded with the tenor of their discourse ; for he had himself no doubt but the innumerable white halfpence, and more than once a yellow farthing, as the girl described shillings and half guineas, which he had given her, were expended, as the knight said, by the mother in the vilest manner.

At his return home, he found the girl in her old corner and position at his door, and John waiting for orders.

Out of humour with his company, the beggar, and himself, he gave his prime minister orders to take the girl to her mother ; give her a couple of guineas, on condition she never troubled him more ; and then uttering heavy denunciations, confirmed by a few hearty

heartly oaths, if she did, stalked into his own house, scarce deigning to return the parting compliments of the civil gentlemen, who expressed themselves, and really were, eager to cultivate his acquaintance.

The adventure of the morning gave the Colonel a nervous head-ach, to which he was subject. He threw himself into his arm-chair; there was something in the plaintive tones of the young mendicant, which particularly affected him; and by one of those strange concatenation of ideas, that sometimes in waking as well as sleeping dreams, jumble the most remote circumstances, persons, and events into one confused mass, a series of recollections, not calculated to ease an aching head, rushed on his mind, till anguish, mental and external, roused him from a painful reverie; and he was having recourse to his cephalic snuff, when John entered with a countenance full of meaning, and before he could give that meaning words, having in his haste left the door on the jar, the Colonel's ire and astonishment were equally raised, at seeing the little beggar follow, with

as much ease in her manner, and confidence in her looks, nay perhaps more, than if she was entering the ruined hovel, which had, during the last winter, given her mammy and self a miserable shelter.

But before we proceed with the adventures of our beggar, it will be paying a decent regard to precedence, to make our readers acquainted with the village of Penry, and such of its inhabitants as will be introduced in the course of this history.

CHAP. II.

A Country Village.

“ It is common to old age

“ To cast beyond itself in its opinion ;

“ As it is common for the younger sort

“ To lack discretion.”

THE village of Penry is the Montpellier of Surrey ; it stands on a half eminence, with uplands behind, to shelter it from the north wind, and low lands in front, to amuse the eye of fancy, and delight the soul of meditation ; to the right of the village, through two thick plantations of underwood, too humble in its growth to obstruct the view of a small market town, at four miles distance, runs a clear stream, just deep and wide enough to afford small fresh water fish to the neighbourhood ; the banks of which

are undisturbed by any thing but anglers, and unadorned by any thing but nature's own embroidery, if we except a small green boat, which, by the large gilt letters on the stern, the curious passer-by is informed belongs to *Sir Solomon Mushbroom, lord of the manor of Penry*; a rough and ancient stone bridge peeps through the foilage of the wood, that slopes on each side the river; and the distant spires of three or four other village steeples, between the horizon and the level land, terminate the prospect.

Penry is twenty-seven miles distant from London, and five from any great turnpike road; which may account for the still greater distance between the manner of the inhabitants, and those who have the advantage of a direct and frequent communication with the refinements of the metropolis; not but Penry had, in the rage for improvement, been greatly altered within the last ten years. Before that time a handsome parsonage house, in which a rich rector condescended to rusticate a few summer weeks; a thatched Hovel, in which his poor curate brought up six children,

and

and instructed the rabble of the village in their A B C; a white rough cast house, with a brown painted door, to which had been lately prefixed a large brass knocker, of Lawyer Quibble; and a little thing like a pigeon-house, with a timber building and a window at one end, filled with blue and white gallipots, over which a black scroll and white letters proclaimed the great convenience to be found concentered in that obscure spot, where, like Diogenes in his tub, lived Doctor Croak, physician, surgeon, apothecary, man-midwife, dentist, and speculator in medicine and minerals. Excepting these, and an old family seat, which had served for the resort of rooks and daws during thirty years it had lain in chancery; the little gothic church of Penry, and the surrounding cottages, had an unbroken sameness about them, that would never attract more than the cursory glance of the few travellers who saw them, if, indeed we do not add another exception, in the White Horse, thatched receptacle for man and beast, at the extremity of the village. Such was Penry ten years back;

and such, with some few, but great changes, is still continued.

The air and situation of Penry was not a greater recommendation to Col. Buhann, on account of his health, than that appearance of rural simplicity which proved it too insignificant to have attracted the notice of the polite world. "For, d——n the world," said Colonel Buhann; "I wish I was fairly quit of it: When riches would have made me happy, I was poor; now, when I have lost every wish to live, I am rich. What has a man to do in a world where he has neither health nor hope? They have brought me from India to Bath, and now they send me from Bath to the country; but till they can send me from myself, it is all labour lost."

"Good, your honour," said John, to whom his master had addressed his despondent sentiments, "take the Doctor's advice; you are ten times the man now you were when we sailed for England; and the Doctor says——"

The Colonel smiled. "Can the Doctor minister to a mind diseased?"

John's

John's eyes struck fire.

"Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?"

John's right arm sawed the air.

"Root out the written troubles of the brain, and——"

John could contain no longer; he took the *and* from his master, and Hopkins and Sternholded on, "and with some sweet, oblivious antidote cleanse—the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff which—weighs upon—the brain"—all that is very true, Sir," said John, "but——"

"Well, well," interrupted the Colonel, impatiently, "if thou canst find a corner where the world and I may not meet; all places are equal to me, where I am not known."

"Yes, Sir," answered John, resuming his theatrical attitude, "all places the eye of heaven visits, are to the wise man ports and happy havens."

John Brown was son to John and Mary Brown, whose united names on the sign of the White Horse at Penry, supported the reputation

reputation established by Simon and Elizabeth Brown, father and mother of John, for good ale and civil treatment.

One female servant at the White Horse, was cook, dairy, house and chambermaid ; and, in the absence of young John, acted besides in the double capacity of waiter and ostler, till one fatal Whitsuntide, when a company of his majesty's servants hired the great barn, and having, without the help of legerdemain, in two days converted it into a palace, for the royal Dane to meet his father's ghost, so infatuated young John, that from the first performance he became a great private actor.

The barn had crowded, brilliant, and overflowing audiences ; and when for the benefit of the manager, young John took a part, under the description of " Romeo by a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage." All the country round came in ; none being ignorant of the name and quality of the young Romeo, except his own father and mother, who as soon as they understood how the player people had seduced their son, and to
what

what the neglect of chalk was owing, shut both their hearts and barn against the prayers of the distressed company ; and though the lady managers' benefit had been stuck up at every door in the parish ; the part of "Mark Anthony by the young gentleman who performed Romeo with such unbounded applause ;" and though the proud Cleopatra herself condescended to sue for one night's possession of the barn, old John took a couple of labourers with him, and while his wife was trimming the suppliant queen in her way, he demolished ' the cloud-capt towers and gorgeous palaces,' and turning the whole moveables into the yard, locked the door, and set off to the next justice of the peace, for the purpose of getting the whole set vagrantized.

They were however too much used to local settlements, to be so taken, and finding the idea, that young John was going headlong to the devil, had taken too strong possession of the landlady, to allow her to shew them any lenity, set the Egyptian Queen, to amuse, or rather provoke her, by persevering

entreaties, while they packed up the property and moved off, leaving not only the rent, but long accounts in chalk unpaid, which every individual of the company had, by the unbounded liberality of young John, run up. Cleopatra had her cue, and when the royal Dane and his friends were clear of the village, flourished her whity brown handkerchief, and made her exit.

As young John was the general scorer, and as before his father's return he had made a liberal use of the sponge, the old people were not sensible of the amount of their loss; the rent, and what could not be concealed from them, was, to be sure, Dame Brown said, a heavy loss; yet again, to be sure, it was a judgment on their sins for letting a tribe of shabroons and painted jezebels into their honest house, to make a parcel of shim sham ghosts and coffins, and such like blasphemies; and so they must make the best of a bad market, and be thankful for God's mercy, that saved their son John from being carried away with them; but under favour the devotion of the old dame was misdated; for John's better part

was actually gone ; it is true he loitered about, listless and indolent, but his mind, his active mind, was in a barn ten miles off, where the royal Dane himself was enacting Mark Anthony, and where he fully resolved to join him as soon as harvest was over ; for he had too much regard for his parent's interest, yet remaining, to think of it before.

But in the mean time it was requisite to keep up the poetic furor by practice. He could read the Bible, or even Say's Weekly Journal, which had been long the standing newspaper of the White Horse, with great fluency ; and his character for a good scholar was allowed by all who saw the flourishing I and B at the bottom of his father's bills. Night after night did he make the cross timbers of the barn resound by the starts and stamping of Otway's Chamont, Lee's Alexander, and Congreve's Osmyn, but the god of his idolatry was Shakespeare ; and being allowed to keep a certain proportion of sheep and poultry, which had, from his infancy, turned out to such account as amply supplied his pocket, he sold them all, for

C 6

money

money, to send to London by the clerk of the parish, for a complete set of his favorite's plays; and being once in possession of this treasure, was so eager to study and get through them, that after harvest he was too full of employment to follow the royal Dane, though still resolved on joining him early in the spring.

The young damsel, of whose various occupations we have spoken, was the confidante and assistant of her young master; for though Dorcas could neither read nor spell, she had a tolerable memory, and could always repeat at least two words out of every speech he taught her; these two, the first and last, were indeed all that were necessary; nor did she fail to be equally punctual in remembering all her cues; so that John was gratified with a nightly rehearsal of his favorite parts: Juliet leaned her fair hand on her cheek at the hay-loft window; Desdemona was smothered on a truss of straw; and the fair Ophelia sent to a nunnery from the barn-door.

The improvements of this winter were indeed so very obvious, both in the hero and heroine,

heroine, that the former had already made his arrangements for joining the royal Dane and Egyptian Queen; his linen and books were ready packed up; Dorcas had promised to steal his new suit of broad cloth out of her mistress' press, where it was carefully deposited from Sunday to Sunday; and nothing in John Brown's sanguine opinion could now impede his career to fame. But the uncertainty of all human events, a subject on which so many great geniuses have so ably written, and so many little ones so truly spoken, never was more clearly exemplified, without either writing or speaking, than by one simple act of the docile Dorcas, who got up one morning in the greatest harmony of spirits, and after bustling through her work, as truth to say she very notably did, walked six miles to the nearest magistrate, and then and there made corporal oath, to certain circumstances, that laid an obligation on young John Brown either to marry the said Dorcas, to pay twenty pounds to the parish, or to quit the country.

John

John Brown's natural integrity of principles, his compassionate heart, and adherence to truth, had received both strength and polish by his studies, and in the same degree heightened the resentment of injury and resistance of oppression, which were the glowing sentiments that governed him in this important moment of his life.

The paternal honour which the damsel would have bestowed on him was what his sense of truth forbid him to accept; and the paying twenty pounds for what he had not done, was a meanness from which his enlightened mind revolted; as to the matter of quitting the country, he had already made up his mind to that; it was only changing the scene of action, and going to London in search of other Royal Danes, and other Egyptian Queens, instead of joining those who were every moment expecting him in the country;—so the world before him, with a stick across his shoulder, from which hung a bag containing a few shirts, and all his Shakespeares, it being impossible to secure the suit of broad cloth without the aid of his treacherous auxiliary,

auxiliary, John Brown left the place of his nativity, without paying the compliment of an adieu to any of his numerous relations and acquaintance; and being young, robust, and a good walker, reached London by day break next morning.

On the table of the first open house he rested his bag, and was immediately accosted by a very civil free speaking man, with whom he readily entered into conversation, and who advised him, as the landlord and landlady of the house were very good sort of people, to remain there while he staid in London; to which he did not object; and himself and bag being shewn to a chamber, he slept very comfortably, without dreaming either of past or future events.

The same civil new acquaintance saluted him on his re-appearance in the tap room, and to his great, as well as agreeable surprise, as he approached with offered hand, roared out, "By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap to pluck bright honour from the pale faced moon; to dive into the bottom of the deep,"

"To

"Where fathom line could never touch the ground," joined John Brown.

"And pluck up drowned honour by the locks," rejoined the first speaker.

Scarce had the honour-loving hero got to "locks," before John had embraced him, and congratulated himself on the meeting with his congenial soul; they dined together in the greatest harmony, and the play bill holding out an irresistible temptation in the entertainment of the evening, which was Othello, the two focias adjourned there; John Brown having first, by his friend's advice, cleared the reckoning.

After the play, at which the hero of this little episode had been both gratified and humbled, the friends being a little dryish, adjourned to a house not a great distance off, where John Brown, who knew every line of the part of the Jealous Moor, entered on as fair and candid a criticism of the performance they had just seen, as may be found in the corner of many a morning print, under the article of Theatre, that is to say, what he did not

not understand, or did not accord with his own reading, he condemned as *bad, very bad*, worse than he had seen in his father's barn; what was at all in his own way, was *well, very well*; though even that, *he* could better; and what does not always happen to profound critics, he found his friend exactly of his opinion on every point.

Bread, cheese, and porter, at this time, was really an attic treat to John Brown; his heart was open; a little punch could not hurt them; one bason was succeeded by another; John related the event that obliged him to quit Penry; his friend most heartily imprecated the perjured Dorcas; poor John fell into the lap of nature's kind nurse, in the very moment that his friend was most interested in his misfortune, and did not awake till the next day, when he found himself unusually agitated by the strange motion of his lodging, as well as inconvenienced by the number and quality of his fellow inmates; it was, however in vain, he complained; his sympathizing friend was not near; and he continued in this uncomfortable situation till he

he was removed far out of the reach of parish officers, when he understood he had enlisted in the service of the Honourable the United East India Company; and instead of finding in his purse the bounty he was told he had received, perceived it was cleared of seven guineas and some silver he perfectly recollected to be in it, at the time he displayed such theatrical judgment in his criticisms on Othello.

In this situation his mind naturally recurred to his paternal home: Bitterly did poor John Brown bewail his own dear native village; bitterly did he imprecate the perjury of Dorcas and the deceit of his false friend; and above all, most grievously did he deplore the loss of his Shakespeares.

When allowed to come aboard, which from his mildness of manner, and simplicity of heart, he was often permitted to do, the sad tear flowed from his eyes, as directing them from the course the ship sailed, he fancied he was looking homewards. The ship had touched both at the Madeiras and St. Helena; and were in that easy press of
fail,

fail, on the surface of a smooth sea, which render the latter part of a voyage to India so delightful. John, whose mind we have before said, was too enthusiastic to be reconciled to oppression; still swelling against the injury he had received, and still hanging with regret on the memory of his native village, was noticed by an elegant young man, in very ill health, who was supported morning and evening by the surgeon and his mate, up and down the quarter deck, whose saffron skin, deep sighs and downcast looks indicated more cause of grief than leaving Penry, being embarked in the service of an honourable company, of whom he had never heard, or even losing a whole set of Shakespeare.

As this young gentleman was going to India, on the military establishment, he claimed a sort of right to have the crying comrade, as John was in derision called, immediately about him; and soon became father, mother, and country to one who had settled it in his sorrowful mind, that all good was where he came from, and all evil where he was going to, and his heart bounded with affection and gratitude

gratitude towards a master, whose every act and word, proved him the essence of all moral virtue.

They were very soon after landing in India sent up the country. Captain Buhanun's trunks were crammed with letters of recommendation; those he deliberately burned: and with a desperation that proved he set less value on his life than any other of the gifts of God; he was first, and most fearless, in all hazardous expeditions; a volunteer in every post of danger; and thus, by out fighting and out living his brother officers, he in a short time advanced to the rank of Colonel.

Scotch interest was then, as now, prevalent every where; but our Colonel not only disdained the recommendation of his Scotch connexions, and neglected the friendship of those who knew his family, but, strange to tell, hated Scotland itself, and avoided the society of his countrymen, with every appearance of a rooted antipathy.

As the Colonel advanced in rank, reputation, and fortune, his man, or as he was often pleased to call him, his *friend John*, advanced in

in his favour and confidence, and to crown the good fortune and felicity of the latter, he procured at Calcutta a fresh set of Shakespeare, and from being admitted behind the scenes of the theatre there, was by degrees advanced to carry messages, and enact with eclat one of the most respectable senators in Venice Preserved, to say nothing of the dignified deportment of his Lord Mayor, in Richard III.

The heroes of the Calcutta theatre, which was established on a benevolent plan, were all gentlemen. The Roscius of the company had a lameness in one hand, very unfortunately obstructive of the grace attendant on heroism; yet he beguiled John Brown of his tears so often, that he became in his idea the very actor delineated by Shakespeare himself. John was his humble copy in every thing, even to the stiffness in the arm; and as Captain ——— acted at the Calcutta theatre, to the admiration of the elegant subscribers, John rehearsed at camp, to the as great admiration of his comrades, till he could manage all Shakespeare's beauties with as much ease as Pantagruel did the

the hard words his father insisted on his repeating backwards and forwards till they became as familiar one way as the other.

But Shakespeare was not the only study of our friend John Brown; he knew the master key to every trait in the Colonel's disposition; he was his faithful attendant in all the sicknesses to which the climate, and his more dangerous restless and dissatisfied mind exposed him; and after all remedies had been tried, without success, to parry a bilious disorder, that was gaining on his constitution; after the friends of his virtue, and admirers of his courage, which comprised every gentleman who had the honour to serve with him, had all failed, notwithstanding they assured him, with as much concern as earnestness, he must remove his quarters, if not to Europe, to that unknown bourne from whence no traveller returns, the tears and silent anguish of his faithful domestic softened his indignant refusal, and moved him to adopt the only means of preserving existence. He was prevailed on to turn his face homeward,

if

if that place could be so called which his heart abjured.

After nine years service in India, Colonel Buhanun got leave of absence, for the benefit of his health, and was landed at Portsmouth in so deplorable a state, that it was not thought possible he could reach Bath alive.

Whether his extreme indifference for life continued till it was on its verge, or whether the near view of eternity did not awaken a latent desire to struggle with the ills of frail mortality a little longer, is a problem we cannot solve; but the lenient spring of Bladad, so far restored him, that after six months residence, his physicians had the candour and self denial to advise his leaving Bath for the country, during the dog days; and John obtained leave to seek out for a situation, where the only stipulation, on the part of his master, was, that it should be where he might not *meet the world*.

The world, John perfectly remembered, had small concern in the little village of Penry, when he left it; for then, the gay building now called Mushroom-Place, was
the

the ruins of a mansion so long disputed in chancery, that it had at length ceased to interest either of the then claimants, and was sold by auction, to defray part of the law expences, and knocked down to Sir Solomon Mushroom, the present possessor; neither had Doctor Croak changed his tub, for the new erected building, and fine gardens at the extremity of the village; nor did the brass knocker irradiate the front of Lawyer Quibble's mahogany door; the only building which, in his remembrance, seemed to claim acquaintance with the world; was the parsonage, which the knick-knackey taste of the late incumbent had rendered like nothing in heaven above, or earth beneath; it was very conspicuous, very fine, and very inconvenient; it had within one quarter of an acre of ground, a pond, willows, a maze, images of all sorts, a tea-room at the top of a large oak, and a pagoda made of branches of trees. These profound objects, which had employed twenty years of the life of a divine to bring to perfection, were the points of gazing admiration to all the country, and still retained the first place

place in John's idea of magnificence, as did every other part of the village, in his partial preference of the scene of his juvenile amusements ; among those the White Horse, and all its appendages, were predominant figures, although the honest pair who gave him being had long, he knew, paid the debt of nature.

" Ah !" said John, after a few minutes consideration, " there is a village in the county of Surrey, if your honour could but see it—only I am afraid——"

" Well, and what art thou afraid of, friend John ?"

" There is not any house in it good enough for your honor."

" And yet, John, thou knowest how many nights we have passed without a roof to shelter us."

" And shall again, I hope, when your honour gets better ; but

" In peace there's nothing so becomes a man

" As modest stillness and humility ;

" But when the blast of war blows in our ears,

" Then imitate the action of the tyger."

The Colonel smiled. "And where is this village?"

"I was born there, and please your honor."

The Colonel took in at once all the superlatives of a village recommended by native affection, and ordered the carriage to be ready by nine the next morning.

John could not restrain his raptures during four days they were journeying to Penry, and the approach to the village filled his honest heart with sensations as pleasing to the Colonel to observe, as delightful to himself to feel; not a stile, a tree, or thatched cottage, but were congenial to his feeling, and renewed some scene of infantine amusement in his memory; tears stood in his eyes.

There he used to play at leap frog; from *that* mount his kite had slipped from his hold, and to his unspeakable grief, soared out of all possibility of recovery; in *this* cottage had lived his maternal grandmother; in *that* his aunt; *there* he went to school; and *there*, exactly under the south window of the church, were interred three of his brothers,

and

and his sister Ann, who, poor girl, died for love of a drunken shoe-maker; and *there*, he dared to say, lay his poor father and mother. The tears now streamed down John's cheeks; the tremor on his master's voice secured him from interruption; and his agitation so increased when the chaise stopped at the White Horse, that the Colonel stepped out, and walked up the road, to indulge in reveries of his own, not less affecting, but unmixed with that pleasure which tinged even the sorrow of his servant.

"Poor fellow!" said the Colonel, "*his* heart recognizes his native home, unalloyed by bitter recollection: *He* sees not the scene of joys for ever lost;—*he* traces not the footsteps of delight with a mind jaundiced by despair, hopeless and undone. His eyes were raised, involuntarily a heavy sigh burst from his heart; he endeavoured to shake off recollections that unmanned him, and looking round, saw on a neat house a board with,

TO LET, FURNISHED.

Two things immediately occurred to the Colonel; the first and principal was, how

happy it would make John, who had his doubts about procuring accommodation, to find all objections removed, and his abode fixed in his beloved village, for some time at least, by taking this house; the next, that as it stood on a kind of angle of the road, quite out of the village, he could live in it as distinct from the world as he pleased.

Without further consideration he knocked at the door, was admitted, and learned it belonged to a lady, whose husband's death having made some unpleasant discoveries in his circumstances, had induced the widow to pay a convenient visit to her friends, in hope to add to her small income, by letting her house for the summer ready furnished; which however she had not yet an opportunity of doing.

This little history was delivered with surprising volubility, by Betty Clark, upper maid to the widow, on understanding the Colonel was a single gentleman; that he would be willing to engage the servants, consisting of the cook, gardener, and herself; and moreover the very pleasant omen which she

drew from the manner in which he had put a new half guinea into her hand, which she protested was the most genteelest done thing she ever seed.

Before John could disengage himself from a few of the villagers, who remembered him, order dinner, and overtake his master, the bargain was struck; a month's rent paid in advance; and Mrs. Betty prodigiously flustered at the sight of a handsome, if not very young, not a very old man, who was to be her follow servant.

The great drawback on John's joy at his return home, which resulted from his doubts about suitable accommodation for a person of his master's rank, and ill state of health, being thus done away; he in the dear hope of staying some time at Penry, set about his domestic arrangements with an alacrity highly pleasing to Mrs. Betty; got the trunks up; laid cloth; and after declaring the house, pretty as it was, seemed as if made on purpose for their convenience, inasmuch as it was built on the precise spot where he had left a gravel pit, went to wait on his master's

dinner, haranguing during the whole time, on the salubrity of the air, good water, excellent provision, and indeed insisted, that as Penry was the prettiest village in the known world, so every thing of the best was to be had there, though he could not but confess it had one fault, or rather misfortune; this however, it required some casuistry to prove, as it alluded to what few country villages deem either fault or misfortune, namely, a fine new mansion house, with the owner resident, besides a few other modern ones, on a smaller scale; the first of which, in size and taste, was that of Doctor Croak, who from a state of poverty, debts, ill humour, and ill health, had purchased ground, built a house, and stepped into a new carriage, no mortal could guess how.

These circumstances however, call them faults, misfortunes, or what we will, were more in the way of the world than John could have expected to find in Penry, and would, he feared, tend to obscure the beauty and convenience of the place in the opinion of his master; yet, as the owners of these new
erections

erections were too proud to know private folk; as the Knight was a parliament man, and the Doctor kept a journeyman; and as in course they were seldom troublesome, he hoped his honour might be as private, and as happy too, as if there were not a gentleman in the parish.

John might have spared his rhetoric; Colonel Buhanun was never happy himself, but he had an insuperable desire to render every being compleatly so, with whom he was in the habits of associating; and Candidus, when he set out on his return to Europe with his ten redsheep, laden with gold and precious stones, was not more gratified than John Brown, when his master declared his perfect approbation of the village of Penry.

Thus was Colonel Buhanun settled in a village, where, as the observing Sir Solomon Mushroom said, every idle vagabond found the road to his purse.

From the time of the Colonel's first landing in India, where he had been in the hottest part, both in respect to climate and service, to the hour of his embarking for Europe, a total neglect

of all the precautions used by his brother officers, while melting under the torrid zone, had often brought him to the verge of that country he seemed so eager to explore; fevers both of blood and brain had been followed by a *coup de soleil*, and that by the black jaundice, the two last disorders, from either of which it was considered in that climate a miracle to recover, completed a dingy change, which had been begun by a former malady in a complexion truly Caledonian. The colour or colours of his skin were indeed past injury, even from the utmost violence of the billious disease that pervaded his whole system, and obliged him to return to Europe; the only discernable mark of which was, a yellow film over what was once the clear white of his azure eyes; his face and hands were of a hue to defy bile, and impressed the country people with an idea, that he was a sort of black; which idea was confirmed by the heathenish custom of absenting himself from church, after having made one effort to set out an anthem in parts, accompanied by a flute, clarinet, and bassoon, which

either in noise or harmony, so far surpassed all that had ever before shocked his ears, that he arose abruptly and left the church before the performers had half composed the devout congregation by their sacred melody, and never could be prevailed on to look that way again.

In consequence of this, and other as heathenish practices, he was, although allowed to be a very good man, set down for a savage, and called the blackamoor Colonel; notwithstanding Mrs. Betty offered to take her bible oath, his skin was in many parts as vife as hollibaster.

John Brown, as grand almoner to the Colonel, could not fail to renew all his old acquaintance, and forming many new ones at Penry; even Dorcas, whose improving state, when he left her, had multiplied into a ragged regiment of ten children, having vowed and protested that what she said before the justice was at the instigation of the devil; and Tom Wilson, her present husband, without meaning any harm, had her sins forgiven, and received through his hands a weekly bounty

from the blackamoor Colonel; he had besides cousins without number, of whom he had never before heard; the men shook him by the hand, and the women invited him to tea, and play a game at visk.

The fame of such odd mortals as Colonel Buhanun, and his man John, spread far and wide. Sir Solomon Mushroom, while he held a being in the utmost contempt, who knew so little of the value of money as to part with it for nothing, or what is next to nothing, giving it to the poor, felt his spleen rise to an extreme troublesome height, at the blessings bestowed on the blackamoor Colonel, and could not conceal his indignation on finding that a fellow in livery dared, by making himself respectable, to infuse into the heads of his simple tenants, the absurd idea, that a good servant might be of more value to society than a bad lord, or what was more, a parliament man, or what again was more than all, lord of the large manor of Penry.

The Colonel was in his opinion a fool on two accounts; first, for giving away his money,

money, and next, for letting his servant have the credit of it.

Of what use is wisdom, if it cannot manage folly, thought Sir Solomon Mushroom. Very hard, indeed, that a rich man should set himself down under the wall of his extensive park, by whom every body but himself was a gainer; but it would be more strange than hard, if he did not some how or other come in for a share at least. While he laid a kind of indefinite scheme, by which he meant to advantage himself, he beset the Colonel's morning and evening walks, in hope to break him of habits which lowered his own self-estimation; and as all comparisons are odious, rendered his character the more obnoxious, as that of his neighbour became more respected.

But the same rumour that had conveyed anecdotes of the folly of the blackamoor Colonel to the wife Sir Solomon Mushroom, had not been less minute in the description of a few particulars in the character of the latter, by no means favourable to the intimacy he so officiously courted.

Yet little desirous as the Colonel was to make new acquaintance, and least of all with a person of Sir Solomon's description, there was that excess of civility in the Knight's address, such plausibility in his manners, and he exhibited whenever the smallest opportunity offered, so much of that penetration into the worst part of human nature, which is miscalled *knowledge of the world*, that the Colonel had been sometimes amused, but never before offended, by his rich neighbour.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The beggar out of her rags, and a lesson for female servants to single gentlemen.

“WHAT the plague brings you here now? am I never to get rid of this cursed little imp!” said the Colonel, half addressing the beggar, who, as we have before said, followed his servant into his presence, and half apostrophizing, with his eyes fixed on the marble hearth.

“Please your honour,” said John, his arm in motion, “I shall

“Nothing extenuate

“Nor ought set down in malice;”

the short and the long of the story is just this: Rosa Wilkins, the mother of this poor little object—Don’t cry, child; his honour won’t

be angry with you, for what you can't help,—sent her every day to watch when your honour went out, as she pretended, to get money; but she was a deep one, as is proved; for yesterday a letter came by post to her, which she got Doctor Croak to pay for; so this morning, what does she do, an unnatural hag, but send the poor innocent child to beg, as usual, and take herself outside the stage to London, and left this bit of paper on the woman's table, who out of charity, let her lye in her out house."

"D—n the woman, the out house, and the letter! if the cursed jade has left her bastard, why must I be plagued with a Canterbury tale!"

"Canterbury, your honour! the woman's gone to America."

Just at this moment entered the triumphant Sir Solomon Mushroom, followed by the grand officers of the parish, consisting of the beadle, the church-warden, overseer, and common cryer, and in the rear a crowd of villagers.

"Ay,

“ Ay, ay,” said the Knight, “ I foresaw this ; I knew you would repent your indiscriminate charity ; ha—ha—ha, and so the creature is off, and has left her brat to you, as a mark of gratitude ! yes, I see you are hurt, and I don’t wonder at it ; but if you trust to *me*, I’ll take care this shall be the last imposition on your good nature ; *you* are too easy, but such abominable wretches shall never be tolerated, when I have any influence ; I see into the plot ; but I came to your relief the instant I heard what had happened. Here, beadle.”

The beadle advanced with his gold laced hat on his two thumbs.

“ Oh but man ! proud man ! ” quoth John.

“ Dressed in a little brief authority.”

Sir Solomon paused.

“ Take that little impostor to the work-house, and, d’ye hear, make her work,—mind the proverb, spare the rod and spoil the child.”

The beadle, whose red face, laced hat, and large coat, had been too often a minister of terror to the mother, not to be immediately recognized by the child, was advancing with

con-

consequential step towards her, and she retreated with trembling precipitation, till getting close to the Colonel, she clasped his knees with her dirty arms, screaming, "No, no, I won't go with you,—I will stay with the blackamoor till mammy comes home. Oh! pray, do let poor Rosa stay with you, indeed, indeed I will be very good; Oh let me! I will stay,—I won't go——"

"You won't won't you huffy?" roared Sir Solomon, brandishing his cane.

The child, unable to look on an object so terrific, hastily endeavouring to hide her already swollen and bruised face, struck it against the chair, and the fresh gushing blood streamed on the Colonel's clothes.

Several poor people had followed the great men of the parish, with a staring, "What's the matter, good folks?" but as the mighty Sir Solomon had set his face against the little beggar, no one dared to pity her.

In Colonel Buhanun's natural disposition, the desire of doing universal good, was blended with the essence of fine breeding; but certain distressing events, in the early part of his life,

life, had soured his temper, and rendered him irritable sometimes almost to madness. No man breathing was worse qualified to bear undue familiarity, or forbear an affront. He had considered the unasked advice of the Knight as impertinence; he felt this visit an intrusion, and reflecting it was a rudeness for which no apology could be made, but that he would be least inclined to admit, *wealth* and *power*, his gall arose; he looked round on the gaping crowd, and saw several who had partaken more largely of his bounty than the little object who hid her bleeding face between his knees, without half her misery to claim it. Not a sigh of pity from any of them, reverberated those that burst from his feeling heart; he saw no salt rheum in any eye to countenance his own; he darted a glance of disgust at them all, and rising with dignity in his mien, and authority in his voice, demanded by whose permission any of the party had presumed to enter his house.

Sir Solomon's broad eyes were opened still broader; the beadle shrunk behind the warden;

warden; and the movement of bows and curtsies became general.

Sir Solomon, whose modesty had stood many a public and private rebuff, soon recovered himself; he called a smile into his features, and was in the act of opening his ready lips, when the Colonel, in a stern commanding voice, bid John clear the room.

John, however, was not put to any trouble, as no body seemed inclined to prolong their stay, not even Sir Solomon, who being, as he said, a very peaceable man, did not chuse to hazard an opposition to a mandate so explicit, but calmly assured the parish officers, as they descended the steps, the man was certainly mad.

The Colonel being now left alone with his man and the little beggar, bid her hold up her head, and not keep such a d——n'd snivelling; but the instant she, in obedience to his commands, ventured to peep up, and displayed her swelled and disfigured face smeared with blood, and bathed in tears, he was obliged to have recourse to his cephalic snuff, and rung the bell with great violence.

John

John approached his master, but his service was rejected with a fretful pish.

Betty, or indeed more properly as head servant to a single gentleman, Mrs. Betty, who was on the wonder and the listen, entered.

“Take that animal down stairs, wash her all over in a large tub of water, and take particular care of her head, wash the blood off *clean*, and, d’ye hear, *tenderly*.”

“Who, me, Sir! me wash a little filthy beggar!—me clean her nasty head,—me! really, Sir, I must beg to be excused.”

“Then see it done.”

Mrs. Betty had gained one point, and therefore it was folly to stop before she had been equally successful in a second.

“She had so much regard for her master, she would lay down her life to serve him, or do any thing in her power, by night or by day, to oblige him; but to take a filthy beggar into his clean house, and expect creditable servants to soil themselves, by handling the street dirt, she hoped his honour would not be angry, but upon *her* honour it

was

was what she could neither do herself, nor ask Jenny Cook to do."

"Oh curse your nicety!" said the Colonel sternly; "but you must get over it this moment;—the beggar or your wages, the rub or the door."

Mrs. Betty was in the habit of saying what *she* thought very smart, but what her superiors called very pert things, and with all possible temper, without affecting to understand herself, could be very impertinent; but she had the sense to see she had now gone quite the length of her tether.

To wash and clean the dirtiest little beggar that ever crept on a dunghill, who was indeed herself a moving dunghill, was certainly a disagreeable job; but then to lose a place where there was no mistress; where her bills were paid without being examined; where there was a fellow servant, who besides his good looks, having lived so long with so generous a master in India, must have made some savings, and to whom she flattered herself she was not disagreeable; was a balance all to nothing against nicety, so that instead of
carrying

carrying a second point, Mrs. Betty saw her wisest way would be to give up the first. She took out her handkerchief, wiped her tearless eye, begged pardon, would do any thing so good a master commanded, and taking Rosa's passive hand, proceeded to put his orders in execution.

John cast a look of kindness at his master; he advanced two steps, fell back one; "I knew," said he, at last, "your honour who have saved so many brutal savages from death, would not let a poor little christian perish in a protestant country."

The Colonel nodded, and John got down in time to help to fill the tub.

"Now," said he, "I'll be burned if ever this poor thing knew the blessing of clean water before; how she shivers; hap she may get cold."

"Cold," repeated Betty, not half reconciled to the job; "she has had heats and colds enough to season her, I fancy."

"More's

“ More’s the pity, Mrs. Betty; for

“ Plate sin with gold,

“ And the strongest lance of justice hurtless breaks;

“ Arm it in rags, a pigmy’s straw doth pierce it.”

“ Put some spirits into the water,” said Jenny Cook, “ in place of talking gibberish.”

John mixed a bottle of rum with the water, and in, the little beggar was plunged,

“ My master,” said Mrs. Betty, as she stood totally inactive, while superintending this grand operation, “ bid me take the girl to him as soon as she is clean; but I am sure I shant do no such a thing; because why, it would be monstres undecent; for as to putting on her rags again, they will make her as bad as ever. If we could only borrow a few things for her.”

“ Ah,” joined Jenny Cook, scrubbing away on the arms and legs of the beggar, “ to go a borrerin is to go a forrerin. Master don’t mind a trifle, and there’s Mrs. Jones at shop, her Poll that’s just dead, was about the size o this, and I dare for to say——”

Before

Before Jenny Cook had dared for to say another word, John was off to shop; and before Rosa was out of the fuds, had procured some clothes belonging to Mrs. Jones's Poll, that hung tolerably well on her.

"Well, after all," said Mrs. Betty, "I cannot but say the girl is worth cleaning; she is as fair as a lily."

"And her eyes," said John, "as brown as berries."

"Her hair will be a little carrotty though," said the gardener, who was also a looker on.

"Here's a mark if we loose her," cried Jenny Cook.

"Nothing but a splash of blue," answered Mrs. Betty; "rub it off with the jack-towel."

"A jack towel!" repeated John, compassion in his eye; "it will fetch blood; why, Mrs. Betty, her skin is as soft and as tender as your own."

Mrs. Betty blushed, and reached a napkin, which Jenny Cook used to no purpose. "I tell you 'tis a mark," said she.

"'Tis a flower," said John.

"'Tis nonsense," said Mrs. Betty; "come, let's see how she looks in clean clothes, that I may take her to my master."

Colonel Buhanun, the reader knows, was in ill health; he had, it is true, greatly benefited by his return to Europe; but the bile engendered in the east, still pervaded his constitution, to which his irritable habit greatly contributed; he was also subject to nervous head-aches, and could bear neither opposition nor fatigue; the agitation of his spirits, this busy morning, so affected him, that John, who entered full of the discoveries soap and water had made in the face of the beggar, instantly forgot every thing but the situation in which he found his master.

Among Colonel Buhanun's other eccentricities, he was a great quack; he had a succession of favorite medicines, all of which, in their turn, were infallible cures for every disorder incident to the human frame; and had it not fortunately happened that one grand specific superceded another, before a fair trial was made of the effect, the
Colonel

Colonel must have been long since released from all his complaints.

Norris's Drops were just now the rage, and as it was proper to take them in his bed chamber, where women were not admitted while he was in it, he saw no body but John, and scarce heard him.

On the fourth morning he was able to leave his room; and the muffin was carried up by the little beggar, by this time become a general favorite of the servants.

Nothing in all the *Materia Medica* is so salutary; nothing so soon shews a good effect on children, as cleanliness and regularity; a few days wholesome food, clean water, good combs, and decent cloathing, never wrought so great an alteration; the pale complexion, weak limbs, and rickety gait still remained; but there was a delicacy in her features, a softness in the expression of her countenance, and a soothing harmony in her voice, that was extremely interesting; and as if heaven had endowed her with a sense of her forlorn state, a desire to please and oblige was visible in all her little actions.

The Colonel started, he coloured, he-
sitated, and coloured again: The defect in
his speech was particularly strong, and ren-
dered his, "Who the devil are you?" al-
most inarticulate.

" 'Tis Rosa, Sir," answered Mrs. Betty;
" the little beggar you saved from starving."

" It cannot be,—it is impossible!" The
Colonel actually trembled.

" Indeed, Sir, 'tis the very same; we got
a few things for her."

Rosa put her frock to her eyes.

" Rosa, don't cry," said John.

" Why don't you make your courtesy,
Rosa, and thank his honour for your fine
frock?"

Rosa smiled through her tears, and dis-
played the gawdy flowers on her dress; she
talked to the old favorite greyhound, hung
round John, called the maids, her good
mammies, and in a few hours became, next to
John and the greyhound, the Colonel's great-
est favorite: When he walked out, she waited
with his slippers; when he had the head-ach,
she climbed for his cephalic; when he wished

to be quiet, she was silence personified; when he suffered her to amuse him, her little tongue never ceased; if he was irritable, she soothed; if melancholy, enlivened; and, in short, soon became necessary to his existence.

Some days after matters had been settled in so good a train for our little beggar, John happened to find the bit of paper left by her mother, which, to the Colonel's surprise, contained such a sort of claim on Doctor Croak as led him to believe she was some how connected with, or related to him, and he conceived it at all events right to shew him the paper; he accordingly dispatched a card to that gentleman, requesting the honor to see him.

Doctor Croak had twice called on the Colonel during his confinement; but, as John knew Norris's Drops were at that time in such high estimation as to supersede all other medical assistance; as he concluded the Doctor could only want either to get a patient or make an acquaintance; and as he knew his master would be equally averse to both, he contented himself with giving a civil denial,

without taking the trouble to mention his visits.

The card found the Doctor in his natural element; he was weeding a parterre of crocus' and snow drops; but was too much gratified at the invitation to postpone what he so ardently desired, and returned an answer, he would wait on the Colonel in half an hour.

The Colonel was at backgammon with his man; Rosa at his feet on the carpet, dressing her doll; and Betty fidgetting about the window curtains, when Doctor Croak's chariot drew up, in which, besides himself, sat the rosy faced, large eyed, lusty woman, to whom the reader has been before introduced, and a fine girl about ten years old, on whose clear complexion bloomed rosy health, whose vermillion lips, constantly divided by good humour, displayed a set of large white teeth, and whose flaxen locks grew in great profusion round her healthful countenance, and though hanging rather bushy than in ringlets on her back, added to her Hebe like looks.

" Bless me !" cried Betty, " if there is not Doctor Croak's chariot stopping at our door.

door. Well, that's a good joke; after meat comes mustard; when master's well, comes the doctor,—and as sure as I am alive, Madam Bawky, who but she, and Miss."

"Pray," asked the Colonel, advancing to the window, "is that Bona Roba the poor sickly Doctor's wife?"

Mrs. Betty simpered out a half no.

"What! his sister?"

Betty answered without hesitation, "No."

"What then?"

Betty tried to blush, but failing in the attempt was silent, and the Colonel, to whose most brilliant sallies the confusion of a modest woman would be a damper, returned to his chair, to receive his visitor.

"Is that fine girl," said he, as he seated himself, "the Doctor's daughter?"

Mrs. Betty's affected modesty had been carried to an extreme by no means in her way, since the Colonel's, which was not affected, had ended the conversation in that sort of definite manner that rendered it impossible for her to recommence the subject of herself; his inquiry respecting the child,

however, gave an opportunity she was resolved not to lose, of descanting on the want of character in Madam Bawsky, and to enhance the merit of possessing it in herself.

“ Why, Sir,” said Mrs. Betty, having finally adjusted the curtain, “ no body hates censurableness more nor myself; because why, they are well kept that God keeps, and to be sure I had a virtuous bringing up, and all my brothers and sisters are well to do; but as to this here Madam Bawsky, though she rides about in that fine carriage now, along with that poor smock faced thing of a Doctor, more shame for her, she has got a husband of her own, a fine portly looking person, as I have heard my Mrs. Feversham say; and, poor gentlewoman, she knoed every body’s business better nor her own.”

The Colonel’s seat began to grow uneasy; he looked his man John full in the face; the Doctor had been let in some minutes; the bell below had given notice, that a stranger waited; yet had Mrs. Betty’s harangues on the most trifling subjects, something in them so interesting to her fellow servant, that he
had

had lately more than once caught himself neglecting his own business by attending to her; and his master's look, at a period when his business was to be ushering up the Doctor, instead of listening to the history of Madam Bawsky, called his truant senses to their duty, which he hastened to perform, reminding Mrs. Betty, as he left the room, that his honor could not bear much talking.

Mrs. Betty begged his honor's pardon; she thought as he asked about Miss Bawsky, who, (hearing the Doctor's heavy tread on the stair, her voice now sunk into a whisper) who passed for Madam Bawsky's niece, or the Doctor's niece, or somebody's niece; but, however, all other nieces she ever heard of, had fathers and mothers. "Now," added she, winking and whispering still lower, "this Miss has only an aunt and uncle."

With all that rapidity of utterance for which Mrs. Betty was famed, it was as much as she could possibly do, to get rid of the last sentence before Doctor Croak—he—hem—he hem'd, and bowed himself into the room, when she hastened to finish the half-told tale

to one more inclined to listen than her master: Not that John liked *cenfurableness*, as Mrs. Betty expressed it, but there was something in the story, or the relator, he did like, and so adjourned with her to the little parlour, because there they could be snug, and hear the bell while listening to the history of Mrs. Bawsky, which, like many other good things in a gentleman's house, will come to the master when the servants have done with it.

The Doctor in the meanwhile had crept up to the Colonel, with bows as silent as if he had feared for the drums of his ears; and after being repeatedly requested to be seated, he hem'd himself into a chair, and was attempting something like a compliment, but was interrupted by the entrance of John, who having recollected his master's orders, had abruptly broken up his snug tête-à-tête with Mrs. Betty, in the very middle of the most critical and interesting period of Madam Bawsky's life, namely, that in which she first saw Doctor Croak, and as abruptly presented the said Doctor a piece of paper, in which,

which, after a few more he-hems, the servant being again withdrawn, he read these words :

“ *Mistras bird,*

“ My usben becin listid for a sowgar i ham goin ater him has he as got mi lot to sale with im has too Rosa i think has Docter Croke oft for too tak kar of she but if he wunt she must go to this paris for i shal never see ur eni mor so poor wench i pra to god to av marfi on ny por fol an hal sich por finers so no mor at presen from yor umbel farfant

ROSA WILKINS.”

When Doctor Croak had read this curious epistle through, he looked, without a single he-hem, at the Colonel, as if waiting for an explanation of the manner in which it was presented to him ; but excepting surprise at that circumstance, his countenance betrayed no emotion ; on the contrary, the calm manner in which he appeared to wait for the explanation, rather embarrassed the Colonel ;

but as he, of all men, was least conscious of a design that should shun investigation, an eclairessment soon took place, and the benevolent act and intention on one side, procured from the other all the information in his power to give.

Doctor Croak said, " That being some years back, on particular business, at the house of a relation in Essex, he was requested, as an act of the greatest humanity, to give his assistance to a poor woman in that neighbourhood, who had been many hours in labour, and was pronounced by the female accoucheur, to be in a dangerous state; he accordingly went, and delivered her of a daughter, the little beggar who was at present the object of the Colonel's bounty;—that his charitable attendance, in the hour of distress, had entailed on him a perpetual p'ague; that her husband and herself, who were at that time of sober and industrious repute, soon after gave themselves up to indolence and intemperance, and became so troublesome where they lived, that they were passed to their settlement in Yorkshire, from whence,

after

after four years absence, they returned to the neighbourhood of London; first to Essex, then to Surrey;—that he had recommended the man, to work at his trade, with the smith of the village, but for one day that he would work, he lay three about the village, him and his wife in a state of brutal intoxication, and when the last penny was expended, his gate was constantly besieged with their petitions for relief, which they generally obtained;—that they became such nuisances to the inhabitants, it was his interference only prevented their being not only removed, but punished; but that this, his lenity, instead of reforming, had, as it seemed, only added to their vices, for that after every absence they returned more deplorable and more abandoned than before;—that lately the woman and child appeared without the husband;—that the last application he received from her was for a shilling, to pay the postage of a letter, which he understood was from the man, who he then, for the first time, heard had enlisted into a marching regiment, under orders to embark for America;—that the

letter which she shewed him, inclosed a small draft for her expence to Portsmouth, where he had drawn her lot as one of the females permitted to embark with the regiment;—that he had no suspicion of their intention to abandon their child, whose bad habits, however charitable he might feel inclined to be, and charity was his *weak side*, as well as the imbecility and disorders she must have contracted from drinking spirits, were insuperable bars against any other efforts in her favour than sending her to the parish.”

A tripple he-hem concluded the Doctor's speech.

Colonel Buhanun had not ceased turning round and round his cephalic snuff-box from the beginning of the history of the birth, parentage, and education of the little beggar, to the Doctor's conclusive he-hem; he mused a few seconds, and then allowed, if the case were exactly as the Doctor had stated it——

The Doctor declared, on his honour, at the same time spreading his hand on that part of

of the body where honor is supposed to reside, that it was.

Well then, the Colonel allowed neither mother or child had, in that case, any other claims on him than might be naturally expected to result from the *weakness* he confessed himself subject to.

The Doctor with great modesty again acknowledged his *weak side*; but he had, since he began practice in midwifery, brought some hundred children into the world, the major part of whom were of very poor parents; not, however, so poor, but, except in this one instance, they had all paid him, by fair means or foul, in meal or in malt, as the saying was; and if he were once, be the urgency or distress of the case what it would, to dispense with payment; if he was to give way to his natural *weakness*, in behalf of all the children he brought into the world, what——

“Enough, enough, Sir,” interrupted the Colonel; “charity, I plainly perceive, is your *weakness*——the charity that begins at home.”

Doctor

Doctor Croak bowed respect to that virtue he was too prudent to imitate. Colonel Buhanun's eccentricities, in comparison with the immense wealth rumour's hundred tongues had been so liberal as to give him the reputation of, were nothings, mere specks in the sun; and as to his plain speaking, rich men had a right to speak how they please; Who could be more blunt, more insolent, more over-bearing, or more tyrannical than the Doctor himself, when and where he dared? Then the lusty lady, who waited with extreme patience in the carriage at the door, had, on the credit of his great wealth, charged her cher ami to make this visit introductory to an improving connexion.

The Doctor, therefore, with equal earnestness and humility, endeavoured to exonerate himself from the censure of selfishness, and with some apparent reluctance adverted to situations which must substitute œconomy for generosity.

A worm might guide Colonel Buhanun, when the world could not force him; his coun-

tenance softened, and he admitted the Doctor's qualifying excuses the readier, as he had, he said, previously determined to provide at present for the little beggar himself.

The Doctor warmly commended an act so charitable ! so benevolent ! and so humane ! so noble ! so uncommon !!!

The most unacceptable thing that could be offered Colonel Buhanun was, that natural sister of flattery, praise ; he denied it to be at all uncommon for a man to act in a way that most contributed to his own ease and amusement. " The child," he added, " answers both these ends to me ; and when I return to India——"

" True, Sir, very true," interrupted Doctor Croak, having, as he supposed, fathomed the depth of the Colonel's charity, " you may then oblige the parish to take her."

Doctor Croak, when before his superiors, generally spoke as he he-hem'd, in piano ; but Col. Buhanun's forte exceeded, at this time, all rules of moderato : " Get out of my way, you little devil," said he, rising

rising, to Rosa, who sat between the greyhound and her doll at his feet, "get out of my way."

The Doctor rose mechanically.

"And do you think, Sir," roared the Colonel, "that I have rescued this poor innocent from starving, just to feed my own caprice? D——n the girl, what is she whimpering for! and that I will then return her to your parish, your beadle, and your knight?"

He-he-hem preceded an attempt of qualification; but though this was admitted in the Doctor's own case, the soul of Buhanun was above all salvos; his motives, his actions, his sentiments, and his pursuits, were all in the straight onward path of open sincerity: In offices of kindness and benevolence, he often meant what he did not say; but never in any case did he say, what he did not mean.

"Oblige the parish to take her," rung on his ears; he looked fiercely at Doctor Croak, and fancied he saw in his diseased visage a more diseased soul. The more the disciple of Galen attempted to palliate the affront, the more

more perceptible did his mental deformity appear; and the lusty lady, with her blooming companion, received him into the carriage in despair of forming an intimacy with the blackamoor Colonel, from this introductory visit.

The Doctor, humble and suppliant as the reader has seen him, was, nevertheless, at times and seasons, a very great personage, and the lusty lady, into whose ample bosom he now poured forth the overflowing of his soul, a still greater.

Mrs. Bawfky had vainly raised the rolling orbits of her refulgent eyes to the dressing-room wherethe blackamoor Colonel sat; she had anxiously watched every shadow of a shade that flitted by the window; and had seen his hasty strides, as he traversed the room, without arresting one congenial glance. She had instructed Miss Elenor Bawfky in the most graceful manner of making a curtsy the confined space of the carriage would admit; when, which she doubted not would happen, he should send his compliments from the window
in.

in a polite bow ; but no such bow being made, the curtsy was of course spared.

The minutia of the interview, together with the certainty that the blackamoor Colonel must have seen the carriage with Madam Bawsky in it, passing and repassing his window, when, after waiting an age, the coachman exercised the horses, without taking any more notice of, or about her, than if the village of Penry had not been honoured by her residence, were indignities it was not in nature to forgive; she cast a glance of defiance at the window, pulled up the glass, and ordered the servants home with the air of Queen Bess, and a voice unbroken by that description of sound called the silver sweet.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing how a village Doctor may rise, and how a modern wife may sink into notoriety.

THE editor begs a thousand, and ten thousand pardons of her polite readers, supposing she should be honoured with any such, for the vulgar people and low sciences into which per force the memoirs of a beggar must introduce them.

But notwithstanding no creature living has a more due and profound respect for the higher order of society, which all ranks know they merit; though no body can be more justly impressed with admiration of the honourable men and virtuous women who at this time are, to the astonishment of one part
of

of the little world, and the terror of the other, whipping and spurring through this short life with as much zeal and industry, as if they had any reasonable hope of a comfortable situation in the next; yet as, to the eternal disgrace of the police, which, to be sure, should order these matters better, there are such things as little folk, who have the presumption to breath the same atmosphere with the greatest of the great, and by the up and down jumble of chance, not only mingle their paltry interests in the grand movements of high life, but sometimes actually swim on the surface, like common oil on the richest wines; and as, moreover, the editor of this marvellous history has never had courage to ransack castles of her own building, penetrate black forests of her own growing, or ransack the bowels of the earth for terrors, natural, and supernatural; as she draws no characters from monsters the world never saw, nor carries her readers to the blessed country of Eldorado, where no body can go, but is content to glean materials from the luxuriant harvest of real life, to frame a story for her book-

bookfeller, herself, and those grand supporters of genius, *novel readers*, the inconvenience is no way to be avoided. After this long and indeed the editor thinks, very clever apology, she hopes she may be pardoned for introducing to the acquaintance of her readers, Thomas and Margaret Croak; the former a labouring gardener, and the latter a feeder of hogs, crammer of poultry, milker of cows, and fatner of calves, at a substantial farmer's in the neighbourhood of Norwich. Thomas having travelled in search of preferment into Kent, found it in a quarter of an acre of ground on which stood a shed with one room and a hole, he returned, married Margaret, and carried her home.

Never were a more industrious pair, nor was industry ever more amply crowned with success.

In this shed were two sons born to Thomas and Margaret; the younger of whom will make great way, both in the world and this history. The children grew, no doubt, in favor of their parents; but Jackey, the hero who was born to have his name preceded by M. D.

coming into the world in the middle of a fine cherry season, when the improved and improving circumstances of Thomas and Margaret had put them into a good humour not only with the world, but each other, established him a favorite.

Indeed all that story of shaking souls from a bag, to be driven about at the sport of the elements, was done away in the union of this good couple, theirs were each other's exact fellow; while he was digging, planting, and setting in this same quarter of an acre, she was crying her round and sound black and white heart cherries, Burgundy pears, Orlean plumbs, filberts, and golden pippins, through the town; and so, by the time the eldest son could add his shrill pipe to that of his seasoned mother, the youngest was sent in whole clothes to a little school in the neighbourhood, where Goody Croak assured all the gentlefolks, who bought her round and sounds, that Jacky was larning to be a great schollard.

Thomas

Thomas and Margaret went on, honest, industrious, and prosperous; the eldest son a working gardener, the younger a schollard, till they first rented, and then purchased a considerable portion of land, which their excellent management turned to the double use, and consequently double profit, of garden and farm,—the hedge rows and borders bore fruit, and the fields produced corn in abundance.

Money pouring in from all quarters; their land well cropped, their house well furnished, and themselves proving by their looks they were well fed; poor Goody Croak began to discover she was a very unfortunate woman, inasmuch as she could not make her son Tom a schollard, and her son Jackey a gentleman; a grievance which, after all her toiling and moiling, rising early and going to bed late, was now irremediable. But in the midst of the most dire calamity, a spark of comfort will appear, if encouraged; and somebody who was not, it is presumed, quite a conjurer, having assured the old woman, both characters might be included in one, she
resolved

resolved to have Jackey a doctor, which would unite the schollard and the gentleman, and so make her the proud mother of both.

The old man vainly remonstrated against an arrangement so heterogeneous, as making *his* son a gentleman; but goody had collected so much cash, by her crying the round and sounds, that she obtained, and tenaciously preserved, a very considerable balance of power, which she always exerted in favour of her darling Jackey.

Jackey's beauty too, in his poor doating mother's eye, became no less conspicuous than his larning; and as, if Jackey lived to be a man, Jackey would no doubt marry, and as if Jackey did marry, to be sure it would be to a great fortune. She set about finding a situation for him, where his prettiness would have due effect.

Chance did all for the Croaks; there was a Doctor Harrel in the town, of great practice and reputation, who had two daughters; neither of these could possibly live with Jackey seven years without wishing to be

Mrs.

Mrs. Croak ; but as both might wish to have Jackey, and it was plain, Jackey could not have both, she contented herself with directing his choice to the eldest, in mere regard to precedence ; and having in her own mind settled the wedding and succession to the business, she paid the apprentice fee with great glee, and returned to her round and sounds.

Every thing went well with the Croaks while they were content with their labour, and enjoyed the sweets of industry with moderation ; but their good genius entirely deserted them, when they refined into gentility.

Jackey's expences distracted the old man, and obliged his mother to keep the peace, by privately robbing the common purse for his genteel disbursements ; for his apprenticeship expired without crediting one of her calculations ; the Miss Harrels laughed at his folly, and despised his arrogance ; and their father was rejoiced to get rid of a conceited upstart, while he was still in full possession of his faculties and increasing business.

What was to be done with Jackey now ? for he was all his mother's care ; Tom the

eldest she left to his other and more natural mother, the earth.

All the polite sprigs of medicine, whose parents are born before them, get finished by walking the hospitals.

Again the poor mother's faith to her husband vanished before the vanity of her son. Jackey was so finely dressed, and had so much money to spend, that he was heartily ashamed of the means by which it was supplied, and found out that no part of the little family had common sense but himself.

In this disposition of mind Jackey resolved to rely on his own simple merit; and simple enough it proved; for hearing of a situation at a sea-port, where a fortune had been made by a surgeon of eminence, it was easy to persuade his fond mother he was eligible to the succession, and that there was nothing wanting to establish him at the top of his profession but a little money.

Home went goody, and never rested herself, or let her husband rest, till the land so well cultivated, in such fine order, so productive, and so pleasant, went to the hammer; to
the

the unspeakable anguish of poor Tom, who had been an incessant labourer to encrease the value of what, as the *gentleman* engrossed all the present profits, he naturally and justly expected would be eventually his own and his children's; for he was married, and had a family. He would have remonstrated; but what was the whole world in competition with Jackey's preferment.

Well, we now see Jackey raised to Doctor Croak; settled with his father and mother in his new house; the old woman, one of her eyes dancing with joy at her son's gentility, the other dropping salt rheum at the rapid decrease of her property.

Master Jackey had no sooner teased his mother out of an establishment as surgeon and apothecary, than he took it into his head he was born for still nobler ends. He applied himself to study, and was in expectation of making an immense fortune by inventions no less novel than abstruse. So intense was his application, and so profound his discoveries, that in a short time he proposed to read lectures on a method of making rhubarb from

walnut-shells, verdigrise from mushrooms, and changing the garden pea into white pepper. For these purposes all the cellars and spare rooms were filled; vessels made on purpose, such as never before nor since were thought of; and while he was pursuing chimera after chimera, as he forsook the business, that in turn, forsook him. Old Croak insisted he was mad, and placed the little of his property that remained in the funds, a cruel restraint was obliged to be laid on Jackey's genius for want of ways and means.

There was, however, still one card to play; Jackey might yet make his fortune by marriage.

The only daughter of a Welch squire, whose too tender heart had surrendered itself to a handsome plowman, was sent to the place of Jackey's residence, by way of a temporary retirement, and Jackey engaged to attend her.

Mrs. Croak heard so much from an old servant, under whose care the Welch heiress was,

was, of the family she had disgraced! what an heiress she would be! and how the land she would inherit flowed with milk and honey! that she clapped up a wedding in her own idea before the young lady had dropped the convenient Mrs. added to her name, and reassumed Miss; when that, however, was done, the poor girl dreading a return to the reproaches of her family, and contempt of her acquaintance, listened to his proposals with great condescension, and became Mrs. Croak within three months after her confinement.

The marriage of Jackey to an heiress was a sovereign balm to all the Croaks; and nothing was now wanting but to obtain her papa's forgiveness and ascertain the value of her estates.

Contrary to expectation, a forgiveness and invitation to the young pair followed the very first application; and they set off in a post-chaise, with reiterated charges to Jackey from his mother, to write all about his wife's fortune.

They were received with affection, and entertained with hospitality; but, oh grief of griefs! every foot of the land was mortgaged to its full value; and three hundred pounds, the gift of a godmother, payable on the day of marriage, the great heiress's whole fortune, on which the Croaks had reckoned for a re-imbursement of all the sums advanced to their genteel son, but which he had secretly resolved should only be devoted to the support of his walnuts, mushroom, and garden pea experiments.

Under this disappointment however, Jackey shewed himself a philosopher.

He had been often mortified at the necessity he was under of bearing his father's company and reproofs, and was ill enough inclined to return to a roof where reproach and contradiction attended all his ingenious discoveries, from a father who paid no homage to his superior excellence.

Three hundred pounds was a small sum indeed to what he had got from time to time from his industrious parents; but it was more than he ever had before in possession of
his

his own, and he thought would be inexhaustible. He wrote to a chymist in London, to enquire after a situation that would not require a great capital, and received by return of post a welcome address to the then surgeon and apothecary of Penry.

Instead of returning to his expecting family he posted to London, and from thence to Penry with his bride and her three hundred, which by some presents from her friends, had increased near a hundred more; and having paid down two hundred for the good will of the business, was quite settled before his family thought he had left Wales.

It is impossible to describe the rage of the father, the grief of the mother, or the consternation of their son Tom. There remained out of two thousand pounds advanced him at different times, a shop full of empty gallipots, divers electrical apparatus, a collection of odd shaped vessels made by his particular directions, of which no mortal knew the use; a cellar crammed with walnut-shells, ditto mushrooms all rotten, and a garret with

the floor breaking in by the weight of garden peas.

Out of evil cometh good, saith the wife man: Thomas Croak, enraged at seeing every thing sacrificed to his brother's gentility, and vexed to find every patient for whose custom his lands had gone one way, going another, had applied himself with such diligence to know the common remedies for colds, fore throats, and fevers, and had studied dog latin with such success, that he had kept a few straggling customers that remained together, during what he thought would be Jackey's short absence.

What Thomas wanted in learning and gentility, he made up in diligence and industry, and by degrees did more than his brother had ever done,—got his own living.

Meanwhile our village Doctor, having now no money to waste in experiments, amused himself by entering into quarrels and litigations, that he might shew he understood law as well as physic.

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His wife, now her fortune was sunk, was the greatest idiot, and most unworthy such a husband of any woman living.

Mrs. Croak, though a well meaning inoffensive woman in her way, had a species of the Cambrian spirit, and did sometimes retort; this her high minded spouse could not bear; words preceded blows, and Doctor Croak's credit fell as he became notorious for beating his wife; impertinence to his superiors; quarrels with his equals; tyranny to his inferiors; ingratitude to his friends, and unforgiveness of his enemies; in debt to every body who would give him credit, and merciless to those wretched few who were in debt to him.

Young, friendless, amid strangers, and far divided from all her natural connexions, Mrs. Croak's health became affected by the inquietude of her mind, and it pleased heaven to release her from misery at a very early period of life, leaving one son, with her last and earnest prayer to heaven and her husband, that he might be treated with kindness.

This event, with the embarrassment of his circumstances, awakened all the dormant tenderness of his fond mother; she arrived at Penry before his wife was buried, and brought with her a warm heart and full purse; so that the extreme poverty with which he had struggled, since he had lost the custom of every being who could go or send to the next village, was no more seen at his table, nor heard from petty duns at his door.

His father soon after died, and bequeathed the wreck of his fortune between the widow and eldest son, who now left the sphere into which necessity had forced him, and returned to that which was more congenial to his abilities and nature.

Mrs. Croak, though aged, continued active in her spirit, and vigorous in her person; she established regular œconomy in the little family; and her son having worn out himself, as well as his neighbours, in disputes, attended to business, and was by dint of the newly adopted process of industry, beginning to get on, when an event happened that entirely altered all his arrangements;

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and though no change of circumstance could change the inward man, it was from this period that he began to suspect there was a system of gentility very different from that laid down by his honoured mother.

Mrs. Bawkey was the legal help-mate of an officer of rank, who having the misfortune to lose the confidence of his royal master, by an accident, more perhaps the result of a combination of unlucky events, than want of proper zeal in his department, fell from that moment into the utter contempt of his wife; so that when the crest fallen gentleman retired from Southampton, where he was hourly mortified by the coolness of his brother officers, to a beautiful retreat, where he wished to lose all recollection of the past in the two blessings he thought he possessed, a good wife and moderate competence, he found his expectation in the latter only realized.

That Mrs. Bawkey had a great soul, we will not dispute, but it was the effect and not the cause that operated on her, to the disadvantage of her husband, with whom no persuasions

suasions could prevail on her to retire from a world's eye, that sunk in fame, and wounded in honour as he was, looked him into confusion.

The unhappy officer for some time indulged her with an establishment in town, while he planned and regulated one in the country, still cherishing the fond hope, that she who had passed the season of life when frivolity has some excuse, would not always persist in a conduct so unnatural and unmatron like, in its decline.

While Mrs. Bawsky shone in diamonds, the gift of her despised husband; while her name was at the top of the subscribers' list to every ball; while she led in all the fashionable amusements; while the humble children of Thespis, who visited the town, courted her patronage, it was not of any very great consequence where, or how her forlorn husband passed his heavy hours.

But, when, weary of her obstinacy, and alarmed at a continued course of expence which, his fortune would not maintain, he spoke to her in the language of probity and common sense; when after proving he could
not

not support two establishments, he was so cruel as to insist on her giving up her's, then it was her great soul took fire; indignation, tears, hysterics, remonstrances, appeals to friends, and friends' interference, were all successively tried, and tried in vain.

If the officer's courage had been impeached, his integrity was unshaken; he had through life adhered to the unfashionable custom of paying his debts, which he knew could not be done if his expence doubled his income, and therefore was immovable.

This perseverance in the right was a sort of indignity no lady could forgive, whose conscience whispered she, though equally persevering, was in the wrong, and she insisted on a separation.

The officer, without being passionately attached to a very plain woman in her 47th year, subject to all the disorders a voluptuous life entails on its decline, wished to enjoy that quiet in retirement which he was deprived of in the great world, and anxious to pass his vale of years with the object that had been familiar

familiar to his meridian, reasoned and re-reasoned; but his moderation served only to encrease the tempest that at last overcame him, and he reluctantly signed articles of separation, with an allowance of 250l. a-year.

So far Mrs. Bawlsky carried it with a high hand, and proved herself to be of that brilliant description of females, who can bear any and every thing except controul; but, alas! what can a high spirited lady of ton do with a few diamonds and 250l. a-year.

True, the magic circle was still open to her; she might still breath in it; but adieu to the agreeable hurry of splendid entertainments; farewell balls; her name must be erased from the first column of the subscription list; no longer her door would be beset on the benefit nights of the theatre, nor the velocity of her carriage wheels render the road hazardous to the obscure pedestrian. Her's was a long farewell to greatness; affluence, credit, honor, and respect, departed with her husband; and with her remained, a proud

proud unsubdued spirit; a mind that in her present situation could neither bear nor forbear company; and a numerous list of cold acquaintance without one friend.

In this deplorable predicament she wrote to a casual acquaintance, to recommend her to board in the country; that acquaintance mentioned her to Doctor Croak; and small as was the sum of 250l. per ann. to support a Southampton belle, it was an immensity to pay for a lady's board at a poor apothecary's in the village of Penry.

See, then, the proud woman, who once, under the sanction of her husband's office, filled a sort of regal dignity, abandon a gentleman's establishment and society; see her domesticated in the ill appointed house of a mean man, whose low breeding and confined notions were the least of his faults; see her companioned with an ignorant old garden woman, and spending every shilling of her income raising the credit of Margaret Croak's genteel Jackey.

But though in scenes so new, the elegant notions of so refined a genius could not assimilate

late

late with the common rules of society, a friendship the most firm, most refined, most disinterested, most platonic, and may be, for there are who say the thing, though improbable, is not impossible, the most *virtuous*, was formed between the widower Doctor Croak and the married Mrs. Bawlsky.

Her information and experience opened a field of un hoped and unheard of enjoyments to the Doctor, who under her influence, though torn to pieces with the chronic complaints resulting from high dishes and indolence, was yet, maugre gout in hands and feet, able to chastise his own mother !!!

Stung at the discoveries her ignorance was every hour making, he totally forgot that natural habits are hard to conquer, and that if Madam Bawlsky was proud of having been a Southampton belle, Mrs. Croak was, from exactly the same ultimate cause, proud of having sold the best cherries in all Kent.

His house became again a scene of low contention, not indeed with a wife, heaven had released her, but the poor old woman, whose natural voice had been so often strained

by

by crying round and sound cherries to make Jackey a gentleman, now shocked every compassionate hearer with repetitions of his unnatural barbarity; and he who in the face of his servants cursed his own mother, was solemnly and bitterly cursed by them, the moment he was out of hearing.

Among other improvements introduced by Mrs. Bawlsky at Doctor Croak's, was a crazy second hand chariot, in which, either to enjoy every moment of his delightful conversation, or to tell small folks what they before knew, that she had at least an equal share in the shew, she patiently sat waiting at the gate of the rich, at the door of the middling, and at the hovel of the poor, while the Doctor got out to visit his patient.

This excited the envy of old Mrs. Croak, who notwithstanding her hard usage, was still proud of Jackey and his chariot; in which she thought she had as great a right to distinguish herself as Madam Bawlsky.

Madam

Madam Bawsky thought otherways, and grew at length so weary of having her authority disputed, and the good Doctor also growing more ashamed of what he *had been*, in the secret triumph of what he *now was*, after a very smart and tolerable loud dialogue between his mother and virtuous friend, very fairly turned the former, at the age of eighty, out of doors, and invested the latter with all the honours of his house.

Some ladies would not have liked this situation, and this situation would not have liked some ladies; but an old woman of eighty, beat and turned out of doors by her own son, and a married woman, the wife of a gentleman, living in all the reciprocal indefinite tenderness of Platonism, with a man, who, if nature had been her own journeyman, would have been a knight of the blue apron, was the wonder of a day only at Penry: The quality of the vicinity, like their betters, preferred any place to their own home. Mrs. Bawsky gave the best suppers in the neighbourhood, played at cards, and wore diamonds; so no body could be more the thing

thing. A short time too again changed the face of affairs; for after this precious union had lasted two or three years, the fine girl whom Mrs. Betty described as some body or others, was introduced at Doctor Croak's, as niece, and a little confounded the quality of Penry.

Mr. Thomas Croak, only brother to Dr. John Croak, who, as we have said, had long thrown physic to the dogs, and recommenced his operations on terra firma, had daughters, but they were, from constantly visiting their grandmother, all known at Penry: The young stranger could not therefore be the *Doctor's* niece. Neither Mrs. Bawky nor her husband, had sister or brother: How then could she be her niece? Thus cavilled the quality of Penry; but like the former wonder, this soon ceased to be one; and the sooner, as during the last two or three years there had been other things introduced into the Doctor's establishment rather more inexplicable than the pretty niece, since, as Mrs. Betty said, she belonged to Madam Bawsky some how or other.

But

But who the money that bought land, built the house, turned the Doctor's side-board of plated furniture into silver, and changed the old crazy chariot with the carrion horses into a handsome new one, and suitable appointments, belonged to, no creature in or out of Penry could so much as guess.

These extraordinary circumstances, so far from injuring the Doctor's practice, had greatly increased it. He proudly declared, he did not want business; for which reason it crowded on him. There certainly was an enigma about him; but, as how ever the money came, the Doctor had it; and as Mrs. Bowsky shared in all the gratifications it procured, with nothing wanting but the death of her obstinate long living husband to render her friendship a life lasting one. By the time this history commences, people had grown weary of wonder; the Doctor, with his *virtuous* friend, were allowed to be rich and respectable; and so much wrapped up in their niece, that her health, im-

improvement, and pleasure, was the real business of their lives.

But what is become of the Doctor's son all this while ?

His son ! oh, he is turned out of doors with his grandmother,

Impossible !

We will see anon.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Shewing the public the blessing of an active magistrate, and how a bloody, barbarous, and inhuman murder, had like to have been found out.

MRS. BETTY, to whom Rosa had flown, when frightened from her patron, felt herself, she said, in an oddish kind of flusteration; she could not make out what whim possessed her master to send for the Doctor, and keep Madam Bawsky waiting so long, only to quarrel with him. To confess the truth, Betty's flusteration was the result of disappointment; it had been her custom from infancy, to make herself acquainted with the secrets of her employers, 'if it could be done by hook or by crook, and she had by long use

use become so familiar with the key holes, that few things escaped her.

When John broke up the snug tête-à-tête in the little parlour, Mrs. Betty followed his hasty step up stairs, and was within a hair's-breadth of her favorite post, when he hurried out of the room again, and took his on the landing-place, from whence he did not stir till he attended the Doctor to the carriage; so that poor Mrs. Betty's flusteration had continued full two hours, when the Colonel's bell rung twice, the signal for Rosa, and in rushed the eager Betty, with the child hanging to her gown, not daring to skip as usual to her benefactor: He extended his hand, scarce able to articulate, the tremor on his voice, and rheum in his eyes. His "What's the matter child?" was followed by her sudden spring round his neck, and a flood of tears on his bosom. After a few moments Betty was ordered to withdraw, and John to attend.

"How soon can we leave this cursed place, John?" said the Colonel.

John

John recoiled several steps, with horror in his look. "Curfed place! Penry a curfed place! the moft falubrious air, the beft water, the——"

The Colonel faw the furprife, the pain he inflicted.

"Certain events, friend John," continued he, has long fince embittered all my hope—embittered! it has destroyed. Thou haft feen me at a period of life, when others are all happy expectation, abhorring exiftence."

"Please, your honor," answered John, with a flourifh of the right arm,

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which——"

"True, John," interrupted the Colonel; "and mine is for ever loft: I abhor exiftence."

John's arm and countenance fell.

"Please your honour," answered he, by degrees affuming his theatrical attitude,

"He is truly valiant that can fuffer wifely,"

"and though your honor did kill a gentleman, I am fure you did it like a gentleman and a foldier."

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"A soldier! friend John; a soldier's sword should not be drawn but in the service of his prince, and defence of his country. If then it be drenched to the hilt in blood, it returns in crimson glory to the scabbard; but when drawn, as mine has been; when stained with kindred blood, dearer, ah how much dearer! than the vital stream which from that fatal hour has dropped in agony from my own heart. Oh, friend John! through all the varying scenes of life's busy drama, it hangs suspended by a single hair over the soul; while unavailing sorrow and bitter regret lays waste all the faculties of the body. 'Tis that which marks my haggard brow, and robs me of rest."

"To be sure, Sir," but John did not flourish his arm,

"Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours;"

But

"Self-love is not so vile a thing

"As self-neglecting."

"This cursed bile, for which they drove me from India! Thinkest thou it was the effects of the climate? no, 'tis the hell within."

VOL. I.

G

"Ah,

“ Ah, Sir !” John was not yet in cue to flourish his arm,

“ The patient must therein minister to himself.”

“ This little animal, by renewing a train of ideas long since consigned to oblivion, has both soothed and tormented me ; she amuses and distresses ; she is indeed become dear, very dear to me ; and I could have loitered here till my leave of absence was expired ; but that unfeeling Doctor——”

“ I thought,” said John, with renovated spirit, “ you could not dislike the place.”

At this moment a kind of indistinct noise stopped the Colonel, and carried his man to the door. Betty was on the second step of the upper stair, pale as ashes, in the act, as John thought, of ascending. He again shut the door, and returned to the back of his master's chair, repeating, “ He was sure his honour could not dislike Penry.”

“ No,” resumed the Colonel ; “ but the idea of this little creature's falling again into the power of that wise Knight, and this charitable Doctor, haunts me. I have business in London. It will be disrespectful to defer

defer longer paying my duty at the India-House; and then, when I have taken some care of this poor child, we will have a month at Bath, and——”

Whatever reluctance John might feel at again parting with his native village, his system was willing obedience; he presumed not to put a wish of his own in competition with his master's pleasure; and therefore stood in the attitude of attention, waiting for orders.

“Get the chaise to the door to-morrow morning, and give the servants notice of their discharge.”

John sighed and bowed.

The Colonel twirled his snuff box, “Thou art sorry to leave thy home, John, but——”

John coloured, “I hope your honour,” said he, “I shall always have the grace to know my home is in your honour's service.”

“If thou hast a mind to stay in England.”

“Who me! your honour; Jack Brown stay in England, while his honoured master is exposing his precious life!”

John burst into tears, and rushed out of the room.

While John was with his master, there was nothing to prevent a conjunction between the ear of Mrs. Betty and the key-hole of the door. She had stood with breathless attention, gasping for discoveries, till stunned as with a sudden clap of thunder, and almost annihilated with horror, she understood that her master, the gentlest of all human beings, who would rather leave the path to a creeping reptile than tread on it, had actually committed murder, and that a sword hung by a single hair over his soul.

Now, as Betty had heard of the sword of justice, and no other sword could possibly assimilate with her ideas, except the one hanging peaceably in the scabbard by the Colonel's bed; when the second stroke assailed her terrified ear, in the resolution to quit Penry, what could she conclude but that Doctor Croak, some how or other, knew of the murder, and that her master was afraid of being hanged? But horror at the confessed murder, was little to the idea of losing a place where she
was

was sole and uncontrouled mistress; where she paid all the bills, and got perquisites before unknown; where she had a fellow servant, who, besides many civil things since the washing operation of the beggar, had hinted, that if old Parker at the White Horse died, and the Colonel settled in England, he did not know any where he should like so well to fix, with a good clever manager; which last hint could only allude to herself, he having often complimented her on that head. The idea of all these losses and crosses so engrossed poor Betty, that she had not presence of mind to separate her ear from its old acquaintance, the key-hole, before John, with his face bathed in tears, rushed, as we said, out of another door.

Surprise, disappointment, and grief, on one hand, and shame of detection, and fear of consequences, on the other, now so overpowered Mrs. Betty, that she burst into that sort of hysterical affectation which is dignified by many of the tender sex by the appellation of fits; and most audibly did she sob and scream the

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moment

moment she beheld John, and perceived he also beheld her.

The truth is, John, whose heart was fraught with the milk of human kindness, had a little liking for Betty, and a great stock of good will towards all the sons and daughters of Adam. He suspected she had been listening, but, as the oral felony had inflicted its own punishment, he would not aggravate her misfortune, by exposing her to the certain displeasure of her master.

The Colonel called to know what was the matter; but being answered by John, "Nothing," shut his door, and resumed an amusement that had lately afforded him much pleasure, which was contemplating the features of the little beggar.

"I am going to leave you, Rosa," said he.

"Do you know," said she, hanging fondly round his neck, "you will be whipped for two things, if you don't leave them off."

"And, pray, what are they?"

"Saying naughty words and telling fibs."

"In-

"Indeed! well, but I am not telling fibs now; I am really going away."

"And me too?"

"No, no; I am going a very long way."

"Indeed, indeed, I'll run after you."

"But you cannot run fast enough."

"Oh but, I can; don't you know how fast I run after you one day in my big shoes, and when I had sore toes, and sure I can run faster and better, now my toes are well, and I have these fine shoes. Do you know who gave me these shoes?"

"Why, who did?"

"Who, why you, you dear beautiful pretty little creature,—you gave me every thing, when I was a poor little girl, and had a bad mammy and sore legs; and do you think I won't run after you; besides no body will let me love them but you."

The little carresses that accompanied the artless court which infant gratitude was effectually paying to the Colonel's affections, added to their force; he bid her begone, for a little flatterer, while he fondly pressed her to

his heart, and he set off for London next morning more intent on taking care of Nelly than paying his respects at the India-House.

John had in the mean time exerted all his power, both of prose and poetry, to console Mrs. Betty, and reconcile her to the decrees of fate.

“ Fortune, my dear Betty,” said he ;

“ Fortune never comes with both hands full ;

“ But writes her fair words in foulest letters :

“ She either gives a stomach and no food ;

“ Such are the poor in health : or else a feast,

“ And takes away the stomach. Such are——”

“ A fiddle faddle,” cried Betty, in a pet,
“ some folks can stomach any thing.”

Before Colonel Buhanun had left Penry one hour, all the conjectured as well as assigned causes for so unexpected an event, which at that time filled the prolific brain of Mrs. Betty, were circulated through the village. It was indeed altogether impossible
for

for her to tell what she did not know ; but as far as believe, suppose, conclude, &c. &c. goes, at all the shops, at the White-Horse, at Doctor Croak's, at Lawyer Creed's, and lastly at Mushroom-place, Mrs. Betty's communications and illustrations were known and canvassed, excepting only the part of the story that concerned the Doctor ; that indeed was, as usual, concealed from the parties most concerned—himself and Mrs. Bawsky.

It was a pity, a sin, a shame, and a wonder,—no pity, no sin, no shame, and no wonder, according to the various sentiments of different people: To Madam Bawsky his guilt accounted for his monstrous rudeness; to the wealthy for his contempt of money; to the tradesmen for his liberal payment of their bills; and to the poor, for the benefits bestowed on them, on the old principle, “ that charity covereth a multitude of sins.” And so poor Mrs. Betty having unburthened her full heart to about an hundred confidants, under seal of inviolable secrecy, thought she might as well step across the paddock,

just to impart her sorrows to a few friends at Mushroom-place.

Sir Solomon was at the moment he saw her approach, devouring with greedy ear the whole history, brought by his housekeeper from the village; a history which a young man, who sat over half a glass of wine at the bottom of the table, took the liberty of contradicting in toto, on the score of utter improbability, notwithstanding Sir Solomon declared that he had suspected the atrocity of the Colonel's disposition from the hour he first beheld him; for that, like the first murderer, Cain, he carried the mark on his forehead.

The youth had seen him many times, and discovered nothing on his forehead but open benevolence and ill health.

The Knight ironically complimented him on his Lavaterean science, and ordered Mrs. Betty to be shewn into the eating room where he was sitting.

"I am sorry to hear, Mrs. Betty—
Drink a glass of wine, child, to raise your spirits."

At

At this hint Mrs. Betty's spirits were obliged, in honour, to sink very low.

"Oh dear!" quoth Mrs. Betty.

"Your master, I hear, poor unhappy man."

Mrs. Betty applied a handkerchief to her eyes with as much dignity of sorrow as if she had studied Cleopatra under John's instructions.

"Well, well, the world is very wicked; but we won't talk of it."

"Oh dear no, Sir, pray don't," fobbed Mrs. Betty.

"To be sure, child, it must be vastly shocking to you."

"Oh dear! oh dear!" again fobbed Betty.

"Between you and me, Mrs. Betty, I always saw it."

"To be sure, your honour," and Mrs. Betty returned her handkerchief to her pocket, "he had a comicalish sort of a cast in his eyes."

"A cast do you call it? 'twas ferocious, canine, downright blood thirsty."

The whole figure, gentle voice, and mild look of the best of masters just then flashed on Mrs. Betty's recollection; but on Sir Solomon adding, "Don't you think so?" she took the second offered glass of Madeira, to raise her spirits, and curtsying to the ground, was exactly of his worship's opinion.

His worship darted a look more ferocious and canine than any he had ever seen from Colonel Buhanun, at the youth who had not yet sipped his half glass of wine, and civilly dismissed Mrs. Betty.

But although Sir Solomon Mushroom *said* he was, on the credit of Mrs. Betty's relation, and the evidence of the poor Colonel's wicked eyes, so entirely convinced of his guilt; though no body in the village pretended to doubt but the blackamore Colonel deserved to be hanged, excepting the before mentioned youth; though even the poor, who had been fed by his bounty, considered his charity as a kind of composition for the murder; there was one other person whom even *he* could not entirely persuade the story was even probable,—that person was his honourable self: *his* regular
system

system had always been, "Admit nothing against yourself;" and that a man of the Colonel's understanding, (for though he had said he was a madman, he knew he was not a fool) should in one minute converse so freely with his servant, on a subject of such moment, and the next quit his habitation for fear of discovery, was a riddle he could neither believe nor solve, though so clearly stated by Mrs. Betty, and though so ardently desired by himself.

To own the truth, it was not without great and various provocations Sir Solomon Mushroom triumphed in the removal of Colonel Buhanun and his man John. And so late as the very day before, coming out of the parish church, where he sometimes condescended to open a large morrocco covered prayer-book, on a velvet tasselled cushion which graced the manor pew, he had seen the villagers, churchwarden, beadle, common crier, and all, crowding round their light hearted friend, John Brown, who was entertaining them, as he often did, with some marvellous adventure he had encountered in his travels, while
the

the great man was suffered to stalk along the church yard, across his own paddock, through his own park, into his own house unnoticed and unaccompanied. His proud heart still glowing with a sense of so great and recent an insult, what would Sir Solomon not have given to be certain that Mrs. Betty spoke the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But the Doctor,—yes, somehow or other, the Doctor must be in the secret. He rang for his white hat and gold-headed cane, and sauntered down the village, to pick Doctor Croak's brains.

But Doctor Croak's brains happened to be doubly cased against the attack of the Lord of the Manor; for first, though a very great man, and in daily expectation of a Scotch diploma, he had not the honour to be Galen ordinary or extraordinary at Mushroom-place; and second, Mrs. Bawsky had never received a card of invitation to any of the splendid entertainments Sir Solomon was proud of giving to persons of high rank. Two omissions which so independant a man

as

as Doctor Croak, and so high spirited a lady as Mrs. Bawsky, could by no means forgive; so that the announcement of this visit was followed by a look of surprise from the Doctor to the lady, and a knit brow and scornful toss of her head in return.

Sir Solomon glanced both as he entered; but Sir Solomon would not now have been Sir Solomon, had he been of a disposition to regard looks, or a scornful toss of the head.

Juvenile impressions are said to be the most lasting; they certainly were so in this instance; for Doctor Croak's fine garden was even more his hobby than his fine house, fine furniture, fine chariot, fine friend, or fine anything.

Sir Solomon happened to be seated by a bow window, which commanded the whole; and never in his life was so surprized as at the improvements, or so delighted as at the beauty of the little spot before him. This begat an answer, which begat a reply, which begat a rejoinder, which begat all Sir Solomon wanted—astonishment at the news in the village.

The

The Doctor, Sir Solomon supposed, with a look of interrogation, was acquainted with the Colonel.

"No," was the positive reply.

The look was now directed to Mrs. Bawsky, whose haughty "No," was followed by a declaration, that he was the greatest bore on earth; and Miss Bawsky, who was playing with a cup and ball, added, he was monstrous ugly.

"Was the Colonel in ill health?"

"Ill health!" repeated Mrs. Bawsky, with a toss of her head, which, whether graceful or ungraceful, always accompanied her sentiments of dislike.

"Did the Doctor attend him?"

The Doctor's monosyllable, "No," preceded "Attend *him* indeed," with toss the second.

Sir Solomon believed he was rather eccentric.

"Eccentric! he is brutal." Toss the third.

As neither the Doctor's monosyllables, nor the lady's tosses led to the desired explanation,

Sir

Sir Solomon was obliged to come roundly to the point.

He, for his part, could never believe any thing to the disadvantage of his friend, Dr. Croak; but there were one certain description of people who would say, and another who would believe any thing.

The surprise, apprehension, and if one might venture to pronounce on secret, turpitude, from looks, guilt, that now shot from the Doctor to the lady, and the lady to the Doctor, revived the hope of Sir Solomon, and was to him the most acceptable confirmation of Mrs. Betty's story.

A silence ensued, which was broke by the last speaker, who hinted, that as the Doctor was so generally considered as privy to Colonel Buhanun's guilt; and as in cases of murder to be privy was, in the eye of the law, to be accessory, he advised, a full disclosure of the whole affair to him, as magistrate, and added, that his good neighbour, the Doctor, might depend on all the service in his poor power.

The

The Doctor's countenance cleared up, and Mrs. Bawsky, who saw, as she said, the Knight was fishing for something or other, would not so much as gratify him with a single toss of the head.

Colonel Buhanun might indeed have committed five hundred murders, for what Doctor Croak knew or cared; and the idea of his being implicated in any of the actions of a man to whom he was so entirely a stranger, absurd as it was, at this moment rather relieved than perplexed him; he left the room with a smile on his half restored countenance, and a very slight apology to the great man.

"All art, consummate art," thought the Knight.

Mrs. Bawsky did not leave the room; but her steady countenance defied the inquisition of his eye.

"We shall see," thought Sir Solomon as, smiling and bowing, he had the honour to wish her a very good evening.

Elate with the discoveries he had made, Sir Solomon posted to the Colonel's house, to have a further conference with Mrs. Betty.

But

But the Colonel's was literally a deserted house, save only by Rosa and Dido; the former whimpering, the latter sleeping on a corner of one of the steps.

It would have been extremely unlike a good fellow servant, had Mrs. Betty left her master's house so brimful of intelligence, without some communications at home.

Will Gardener and Jenny Cook had as many liberal propensities as Mrs. Betty. It was impossible for them to conceal from their cronies what she was so eager to disclose to hers; and though Jenny did not leave the house to the care of the gardener till afternoon; and though Will Gardener did not step to the ale-house till sun-set; at this precise minute, when little Rosa hid her face, as Sir Solomon almost stepped over her, the doors and windows were all open, and no human being near.

Sir Solomon had, during his conversation with Mrs. Betty, not only given her Madeira, but sipped himself a few glasses more than common, and sallied out in pursuit of news, without taking his accustomed evening nap.

nap. "These are a pretty set of servants," said he; "Mr. Feverham will be the sufferer." So resolving to stay and take care of the Feverham's property, he sat down in an armed chair, and dropped comfortably into the arms of Morpheus; till he was roused, not by thieves, though the doors still stood so invitingly open; not by Mrs. Betty, for she was yet busy; but by the murderer himself,—who stood before him in propria personæ, with the now sleeping Rosa in his arms.

The surprise of the parties was mutual. The gardener and cook followed the chaise, which they had seen pass, and were now running in each other's way in all the confusion of self reproach.

"Thou art always in the right, friend John," said the Colonel; "this poor child must not be deserted."

John looked round, and round for Mrs. Betty, while his master's caresses were divided between Rosa, who was, though hardly awaked, hung in transport round his neck, and the old greyhound, who bounded to the
very

very ceiling at every touch of a master from whom for many years he had not before been separated.

In the meanwhile Sir Solomon having, with some difficulty, recollected where he was, and what brought him there, bowed and stammered, "It was very seldom indeed he was at a loss; but to be taken thus by surprise, in his sleep, was enough to pose his wife name-sake himself."

The Colonel returned the bow in silence; and the moment gained by this convenient ceremony, served the Knight to frame an apology for being caught napping in an arm chair, where he had neither right nor business.

"Passing the house," he said, "in the dusk of the evening, and observing the door wide open, and the widows not put to, he had walked in, and, to his astonishment, found no body to answer his calls, or the bell, which he took the liberty to pull with great violence; that after waiting some time, *not knowing* his friend the Colonel was absent, he

re-

resolved to guard the deserted mansion till somebody appeared; which indeed he thought the more necessary, as there were some strange lurking fellows loitering about the neighbourhood; that he had sat down, and being fatigued by a very long walk, supposed he must have just dropt asleep the instant of the Colonel's return."

"But how," answered the Colonel, without taking his eyes of Rosa, "could you pass this little creature, and not remove her out of the night air?"

If Sir Solomon's statement was accepted, it certainly placed him on the obliger's side of the transaction; and he never put on a cool important look with more apparent propriety than at this moment.

"He had not," he said, "seen the child; and as to the air, he believed it would not hurt her; she had been pretty well seasoned to all airs."

The Colonel now looked up; he saw the colour mounting on the cheeks of the guardian of his house; one who hinted at the probability of its being pillaged, had he not stood forward

ward its voluntary protector; and had it been possible to discern a change of colour in his own face, the ingenuous blush, which a conscious inattention sent from his heart, would have preceded his apology.

The politeness of Colonel Buhanun was innate; it was his inheritance from a race as noble in blood as dignified in sentiment; and was more adorned by the native benevolence and fine qualities of his heart, than it could have been by the highest polish of the most brilliant court. To feel himself wrong, and to apologise, was in him one sentiment; and the present harmony of his soul equally new and pleasing, which shone in his countenance, gave eloquence to the apologising bow and frank offer of his hand. "True, my good friend," said he, "she has indeed been too wretched; but she is now sheltered in my heart of hearts, poor child! forgive me, Sir Solomon; this little object is a source of painful delight to me—she has renovated feeling."

The rage of this conversation now was feeling and apology. Sir Solomon took out his handkerchief and apologised for an expression he confessed ill timed and ill applied

plied. The Colonel apologised for provoking it by his rudeness; but he swore (the wicked Colonel would still swear, even in the presence of a reforming magistrate) he swore he would take care the little beggar should never more be exposed to want.

The servants in the hall, the postillions at the door, and even Sir Solomon, almost echoed John's fervent, "God bless your honour!"

Rosa, scarce awake, only comprehended they were blessing her benefactor. She made an effort to free herself from his arms, and clasping hers round his legs, as she kneeled, repeated the "God bless your honour!" in a tone and manner so different from what he had a thousand times before heard her utter the very same words, that he raised her to his bosom, and after a few low indistinct phrases, asked the Knight to eat an egg with him.

The feast was not a miser's, but it was equally rare. Sir Solomon most readily accepted the invitation; and the Colonel ordered supper, which was served before Mrs. Betty,

Betty, who was in no haste to get home, rapped with no small authority at the door, accompanied by a spruce footman from Mushroom-place.

Sir Solomon Mushroom himself, was not more confounded at the sight of his dear friend, Colonel Buhanun, than Mrs. Betty, at the grave phiz of Mr. John on his opening the door.

As her attempt at being overjoyed was received with the most freezing coldness, she had recourse to her old disorder, fits, which, although very violent, failed to excite that sympathy, and consequently did not receive those tender attentions that had so soon revived her the preceding day.

The footman who accompanied her was a party coloured dasher; he perceived in a moment the turn matters had taken; and though he had before pressed Mrs. Betty to allow him half an hour of her agreeable company, which she was too good natured to refuse, had now the cruelty to leave her to her fit, and fellow servant; John followed his example, and the fit vanished as he returned to the parlour, leaving her too much con-

founded to embrace the fairest opportunity that could possibly offer, to inform herself of what was going forward; for John was too sulky to come between her ear and the keyhole.

The Colonel entertained his guest with more good humour and sociability than John was accustomed to see. He also drank more freely than that faithful domestic approved; and notwithstanding the visible reluctance with which every fresh cork was drawn, he called for more claret at half past twelve, and ordered John to leave the room.

“I like this little village of your’s very well, Sir Solomon,” said the Colonel, filling a bumper.

“Mine! my dear Sir,” replied Sir Solomon, after drinking his glass, “not mine; I wish it were; a small estate; a sprinkling of property here and there; but not mine, not *all* mine.”

“Well, well,” rejoined the Colonel, “you know best; you have enough I believe, if you make good use of it. But I enter into
no

no man's business or circumstances. I did not mean the village your's in point of property but residence; and be it whose it will, as I said before, I like it so well, that I am sorry to leave it."

"Leave it! how!" Sir Solomon was astonished; it was a thing so *new*, so unexpected, and so repugnant to his wish: "He hoped the Colonel's resolution was not absolute."

"Fixed as fate; indeed he should not have been so very rapid in his movements, if—" Here the Colonel's ingenuity and politeness was in a state of warfare; he recollected the Knight himself had some share in his haste to quit Penry; but respect to the law of hospitality restrained his natural sincerity, and made a sudden break in the conversation.

Sir Solomon's eyes and ears rested on the "If;" till the Colonel, like a moral philosopher after passing over half a dozen pages of a theological dispute, resumed.

"This poor little animal has taken such a hold of me——'tis very foolish, d——d foolish."

"Why, to be sure, it is a weakness, Colonel, but—"

"Why, no, Sir Solomon, I don't absolutely know that it is a weakness either; for it is such an engaging good hearted little dab, that really—"

"Colonel, my humble service to you."

"Thank ye, Sir Solomon,—that really I am determined to take care of her."

The *determined*, as it was now uttered, was sufficient for Sir Solomon; he no longer talked of weakness, but the great, the good, the godlike disposition of charity; on which he harangued till the fresh bottle was out, and the Colonel fast asleep.

If Sir Solomon was now a little off his balance, he was never off his guard; he gave the bell a gentle pull, and his servant being in waiting, wished John, who opened the door with a sort of erect displeasure on account of his master, and Mrs. Betty, who dropped a low curtsy at every word, many and many a very good night.

CHAP. VI.

*Shewing what we wish could be always shewn, a
good reason for a simple action.*

JOHN with some difficulty awakened his master, and got him to bed, where after one quiet hour, the horrors, nervous head-ach, bile, spasms in his chest, and every usual ill consequence of intemperance on weak health, effectually, as John said, "murdered sleep."

That hour however was not lost. John knew his master's constitution too well to think of going to rest, and crossing the passage for something he either did or did not want, was encountered by the weeping Mrs. Betty, who fought, by every possible excuse, argument,

and blandishment, to retrieve her lost ground in his esteem.

But notwithstanding she reverted to the sad hour that carried her good master, as well as her esteemed fellow servant from Penry, which left her, as she protested, broken hearted; notwithstanding she reminded him of the bills he desired might be settled, which from grief, she was not able to think of till evening, when having just called in on her sister, to vent her sorrow, and was taken so ill there, that Mr. Harry, Sir Solomon Mushroom's under butler, who was accidentally passing, offered, in mere charity, to see her home; and notwithstanding she declared she was at that moment ready to faint, facts were too stubborn to be done away in the short time John would allow himself to be detained, more especially as he was sure he had heard the parties conversing outside the door in a tone very free from distress.

John liked Betty it is true, and perhaps when his judgment was most offended, her eyes shining through floods of liquid sorrow, and her faltering voice, half confession, and half

half reproach, imploring him to be friends, were most irresistible; but her want of care, not only of the favourite Dido, but her total neglect of his master's adopted child, during so short an absence, rendered his forgiveness of her a sort of overt act of treachery to him; and he flung from her with a face of iron, repeating,

"Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself;

"And so shall starve myself by feeding."

"You had better eat a lamb chop with me, Mr. John," sobbed Mrs. Betty.

John stalked into his master's chamber.

But though he had the fortitude to withstand her tears and entreaties, when present, what man exists, who alone, with his head resting on a pillow, or the back of an armed chair, as John's now was, can mentally rehearse the pleading of a woman whose pleasing countenance vouches for her sincerity, without sacrificing his judgment to his wish? It was, he allowed, natural she should be broken hearted, leave the bills till evening, call at her sister's, and be ill. The only part of the story he could not digest, was the good spirits of herself and companion, when the

smart double rap of the door proved at least a sudden recovery; but as the more he pondered on that circumstance, the more it pained him, he wished to believe that natural too.

Then again, how could he in justice blame her for the fault of her fellow servants, to whom she declared, and called all her gods to witness, she had given it in charge to take care of dear little Rosa and the greyhound. *They* indeed merited the fate that awaited them, that of losing the best of masters; but as for Mrs. Betty, after going over the whole transaction, with all these new lights on the subject, he dropped asleep in the firm conviction, she was blameless, and dreamed of her till awakened by the groans of his master.

The violent billious attack, which John prefigured, brought the Colonel to extremity; till it was thrown off, and again for some time fixed him in the village of Penry. The faithful domestic judged from his own feelings, the villagers, while they lamented the cause, would rejoice at the effect; but how was he surprised, when the tradesmen brought in their bills as he had ordered, to find the good black-

blackamoor Colonel transformed into a murderer; nay so universal had been the report, and so unlimited the credit it gained, that the very people whose distress it had been his delight to relieve, were among the most virulent of his accusers.

Irritated at so scandalous, and ungrateful a calumny, received with such avidity, where his master's residence had been of general benefit; little suspecting the share the innocent Mrs. Betty had in a report, which neither his asseverations, nor the credit of past benefits, could do away, his native village lost all its attractions, and he no longer regretted his master's resolution, which now strengthened every hour, to remove Rosa for ever from Penry.

On the morning the Colonel and his man John set off from Penry, they were both out of spirits, and as the village receded from the retrograde glance of each, found an increase of dejection, accompanied by pains and aches, which both felt, but neither could explain.

"My mind misgives me strangely, John, about Rosa," said the Colonel; "'tis such a little delicate thing."

"There's Mrs. Betty, your honour, as good a tempered, cleanly, sober young woman."

"True, John; so she is; and I was just thinking, as I mean to provide for the poor child before I go to India——"

"Ah, your honour, the poor servants will all have a misfortune of such a master as your honour; but

"It so falls out,

"That what we have we prize not to the worth

"While we enjoy it."

"And there's poor Mrs. Betty."

"Ay, I was, as I said, just thinking another post-chaise might have brought her and Rosa with us."

"And they would have been as happy as the day is long, your honour."

"You know I have no children, John."

"More's the pity, your honour."

"Therefore I can indulge myself, without injury to others, by giving my little beggar a servant to attend and take care of her."

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Betty is the very woman for your honour."

"For Rosa, John, thou meanest?"

"God bless your honour! I mean for any body."

"Well, we will dine where we change horses, and consider of it."

As John's regret, at parting with one who professed so much, had rendered his journey unpleasant, he was delighted at the prospect of still having Mrs. Betty for a fellow servant, and in grace with himself for having been, as he had reason to think, of some service to her; his alacrity returned, and he was particular in hastening the dinner, on the principle, that the sooner they went to London, the sooner they would come back.

The Colonel, however, took his time; and when he was reseated in the carriage, repeated the exact words in which he broke the long silence in the morning.

"My mind misgives me strangely, John, about Rosa; 'tis such a little delicate thing."

John suddenly recollected himself; he hoped his honour would forgive him; such a thing had never before happened; he could not account for it; he hoped no accident had——”

“Accident!” the Colonel repeated; “accident to whom,—to what?”

“Dido, your honour; we have left her behind.”

The alarm which the “hope no accident,” had raised, subsided; Dido had been many years the solace of her master; but though she had lost none of her interest in his affection, Rosa was a powerful rival; and if the latter was safe, he could be easy about the former; as she was too old to be of use, and money would recover her if stolen.

John, however, had a thousand fears about Dido; he was certain of Mrs. Betty’s care of Rosa, for two reasons; one, because she was such a good hearted young woman; the other, because it was his particular request; but as to poor Dido, who had preceded him in the service of his master, she was always so much a part of the travelling baggage, and he

he so certainly intended to take care of her himself, that he had never thought of recommending her even to Mrs. Betty ; and how he came to forget her, except she was drowned in the tears his fellow servant shed at parting, it is impossible to guess ; but, be it how it would, John's heart yearned after Dido, and he made bold to hint that, " The more haste the worst speed." If his honour had taken only one day to consider, he would have thought of the other chaise and Mrs. Betty, in which case it would have been impossible for him to forget Dido, without whom his honour never travelled before ; that for his heart, although he had as little superstition as any soldier should have, whose duty it is to obey the word of command through thick and thin ; yet as Dido had hitherto been their companion in all their journeys, he could not help forboding some ill ; and as an accident might happen in a moment to Rosa, or Dido, or even to Mrs. Betty, it could not make above a day's difference, if they returned to fetch the objects of so much consequence to his

his honour's happiness; for certainly, if the poor thing that had gamboled round his honour up the country in India, till his honour's precious sight was drowned with tears, was lost.

"Lost! interrupted the Colonel; "I would not lose her for all India."

"Shall I order the horses back?" asked John; and authorised by an assenting nod, back they returned as we have related.

CHAP. VII.

A secret, a journey to Bath, and a new acquaintance.

"BY heavens, Betty! good Betty," said John, laying a bottle of Norris's drops on the table, to have the unrestrained use of his right arm, with which his right leg also kept exact time,

" 'Tis slander,

" Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue

" Outvenoms all the worms of Nile; whose breath

" Rides on the posting winds, and doth belye

" All corners of the world! kings, queens and states,

" Maids, matrons,

my good Betty."

" Ah, 'tis a vile thing indeed," answered Betty, not comprehending a syllable in John's fine rant, but the word slander; and that its allusion

allusion was to the report she had herself circulated of her master.

If John Brown could please or amuse the Colonel, by a repetition of any chit chat he heard, it was the most welcome part of his duty to do it; and his anxiety to conceal every thing that would have a contrary effect, was the pure result of the share he took in all the unpleasant feelings that affected the mind or health of the best of masters. To tell a man his neighbours had been so good as to accuse him of murder, was a so so sort of compliment; and he recommended it to Mrs. Betty, to forget a falsehood so gross and infamous, was the growth of Penry.

"I will, if I can," replied Betty.

"'Tis a hard task," said John; "but a much harder one to remember it."

Mrs. Betty listened as to an oracle; she had not yet heard the interesting words, "I love;" but saw plainly, she said, she could turn John round her little finger; and so old Parker being in poor health, she went on building castles in the air; while he who must be a material part of the foundation, shunned all his

his old acquaintance, and looked askance at the whole village.

The attack of the bile, in consequence of the excess in which Sir Solomon Mushroom had shared, was so serious, that on its abating the Colonel felt the necessity of an immediate return to Bath; and no longer hesitating about the future disposal of Rosa, nor affecting to conceal his liberal intention towards her, John was empowered to treat with Mrs. Betty, who, though loth to lose sight of the White Horse, chose rather to leave the service of the best mistress in the world, than to give up all hope of returning to Penry as Landlady Brown; and therefore with due acknowledgement to the Colonel, and her best friend, his man, accepted the place of attendant on Miss Rosa.

When Colonel Buhanun left India, on leave for twelve months, it was with little expectation of returning; his leave had been renewed, and a few months only now remained of the second term. He was in easy circumstances; but those who, judging from his liberality, gave him the title of nabob, rather

rather over-rated his fortune; his services and ill health might have entitled him to a share of that generous reward, which so much credits the East India Company, when their invalid servants wish to return to their native air; but he deemed it dishonourable to quit the service while it was engaged in a hazardous war, and resolved to return to his command with the next fleet that sailed.

The reader must have observed, that Colonel Buhanun seemed to stand alone in the world; and they also understand he was a North-Briton of good blood; but good as it was, he had solemnly abjured it,—had stubbornly rejected all advances from every part of his family, and foresworn any kind of connexion or acquaintance with them; he had now been a year landed in Britain, without naming, or being named by a Buhanun; indeed the inflexibility of his temper had long put an end to the applications of his family; and though he was known to be an honour to them, they were obliged to acquiesce in his estrangement.

Whether

Whether, however, he considered his next of kin as the just heir of his personals, whether indeed he had thought on the subject, or whether, like most invalids, who have outlived many dangerous attacks, he still depended on surviving, is uncertain; but he had never made any other disposition of his fortune, than writing a letter to his father's elder brother, in behalf of John Brown, desiring him to give him five hundred pounds, and ten pounds a year for life. Before he left Penry he wrote another letter, in behalf of his protegee, giving her five thousand pounds, and one hundred per annum; which letters he had given to his man, with orders to deliver them as addressed, whenever he should die.

John, to whom he confided all his money matters, knew, within a few hundreds what he was worth, and how he had got it. He had made some little savings of his own; but having never looked forward to greater expectations than living and dying with his Colonel, thought little, and cared less about
who

who should enjoy his master's fortune, when the present possessor was no more.

The Colonel was a little puzzled about the domestic arrangements of a family. He had been most of the latter part of his life in his tent, or a sick room, and admitted women into neither. John was indeed always a favorite with the fair; but he knew as little of their family customs as his master.

Sir Solomon Mushroom, who called himself a fellow sufferer, from the late hour and good wine, could not be refused admittance during the Colonel's confinement. In the casual history the open hearted Colonel gave of his journey and sudden return, the Knight saw, as he fancied, an over eagerness; he looked into the hollow eye of the speaker; he examined all the outlines of his saffron countenance, now animated by benevolence, now glowing with affection; and contrasted it with the cool impenetrable manner in which all his former advances to familiarity had been received. "Ah!" said he, mentally, "guilt has then humbled him." But it was only mentally; every word his lips uttered

was

was adulation refined by cunning. He was warm in the commendation of the charity he had vainly sought to repel; complimented feelings he both scorned and suspected; and secretly resolved, if the Colonel escaped the sword of justice, which Mrs. Betty declared he was himself conscious hung by a single hair over his head,—if he persisted in his nonsensical adoption of the beggar—if on inquiry he should prove to be a man of large fortune, which indeed he much doubted,—if that fortune was to be given Rosa;—if all these ifs turned out certainties, why then Sir Solomon Mushroom had already preconcerted a plan by which he should eventually be a gainer more ways than one. He was of course vastly taken with the pretty Rosa; and as Rosa got over her terror at his sight, she also was vastly taken with him; which pleased him so much, that, to the astonishment of those who best knew him, he actually paid half a crown for a doll, and carried it to her in his pocket.

After

After this great effort Col. Buhanun remembered no more of Sir Solomon Mushroom's real character, than if he had lived in the Hebrides ; and his oracle, though not quite so clear, secretly allowed, that those people who said his master was mad, would say any other thing as false ; therefore Sir Solomon might not be so very bad ; for the devil himself was not so black as he was painted.

Sir Solomon, though a batchelor, was a sort of family man ; he had nieces, if he had not daughters ; he advised the Colonel to visit Mrs. Feversham, the lady of whom he rented his house, who was now at Bath.

" She," said the Knight, " can manage every body's affairs but her own ; she will take care *our* little favorite is properly accommodated, and recommend whatever is requisite to her age and sex."

The Colonel was very much pleased at this idea ; and they parted with mutual professions of esteem and regard.

Two post-chaises set them down at one of the first inns in Bath ; after sleeping the last night at Devizes, where the Colonel had
closeted

closetted his man and maid, to charge them never to mention the circumstance of Rosa's origin, and to call her by his own surname.

It was enough for John to know his master's will, and to obey it; he bowed in silence and retired; while Mrs. Betty made a number of protestations, that she would in no one instance deviate from the minutest particle, and directly went from his apartment to a snug parlour within a bar, which brought the White-Horse at Penry to her mind, where she in confidence told the whole story to the landlady, who with a face of astonishment, told it her husband, who told it the head ostler, while he was overlooking and placing the baggage, who was too much surprized at so strange an anecdote, as a nabob Colonel adopting a little beggar, to refrain speaking of it before his deputy and the drivers, by whose liberal communications it travelled to Bath, and by the same progression mounted to the parlour of the landlady there, as it had descended at the Devizes.

From

From the inn the Colonel sent a card to Mrs. Feverham, who grieved at the loss of so good a tenant in her house, was preparing to return to it herself.

Mrs. Feverham, a widow, now in the fortieth year of her age, was endowed with good natural abilities; and had she not in her youth taken it into her head, she was a great wit and a complete beauty, might have moved through life, admired and respected; for her face, before it was disfigured by pearl powder and rouge, was pretty; and a quickness of idea, with much reading and retentive memory, rendered her conversation agreeable, before she resolved it should dazzle every being, who for their sins were condemned to be wearied with the constant absurdities of her stupendous understanding; yet with all the masculine knowledge she was pleased to arrogate to herself, she was by fits the prettiest trisler in nature; would throw herself into all manner of childish postures, lisp silly questions, say thoughtless things, laugh at her own folly, and apologise for it, by confessing she was the most giddy

giddy creature in existence. To these inconsistencies in her character, she added an insatiable passion for personal admiration: having for the last ten years of her life taken infinite pains to convince her acquaintance that the received idea of the time of her nativity, was all an error of memory, and that she was still a very young woman, she had at length actually persuaded herself into that happy certainty; and consequently so fine and so sensible a creature as she knew herself to be, could not conceive how a whole year of her widowhood had elapsed, without one male creature exerting all the powers of eloquence, to prevail on her to lay aside weeds which, truth to say, were beginning to look as weary of the wearer, as the wearer could be of them.

The card from a rich East Indian, though she had understood from her friends near Penry and from her confidential servant Betty, that he was monstrous ugly, and shockingly disagreeable, set her into one of those pleasing hurries, which agitate, without paining the female mind, when preparing to receive a male visitor, who is designed by

fate, or themselves, to fall prostrate before them; in a word, this attention from Colonel Buhanun was highly flattering to Mrs. Feversham's vanity; and having made a few purchases at Bath to dash away with at the parish church of Penry, these were all unpacked, the rusty weeds laid by, and behold, instead of the sad matron the Colonel expected to meet, a pretty trifler glided into the room, her head tottering under a plume of black and white feathers, and every other part of her pied habiliments such as might properly adorn blooming fifteen.

The Colonel started; he fancied he had been, by some mistake, shewn to another lady, and was on the point of apologising, when beauty having, as Mrs. Feversham conceived, done its part, she resolved wit should have its turn, and opened on the poor Colonel with such a torrent of eloquent nothings, as imposed an astonished silence on him, which the pause in her volubility could not give him courage to break, till the lady, who to her infinite gratification perceived a confusion which could proceed she thought,
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but from one cause, with infinite sweetness apologised for her giddiness, and adverted to his residence at Penry, and her regret at losing so respectable a tenant.

As this was a little descending from alt into common sense, the Colonel recollected himself, and the business that brought him so far out of his way as to visit a modern fine lady; but the disgust she inspired rendered all the little services he had intended to thank her for, of too small importance to be purchased at so great price, as the bearing another half hour of Mrs. Feversham's transcendent beauty and wit; he therefore paid her a sort of confused incoherent compliment, and took an abrupt leave, followed however till the top of his chair was let down, by the gracious smiles, wit, raillery and compliments of the enchanting widow; and while he retraced with astonishment the short visit, which he determined never to repeat. She had already foretold a thousand pleasant consequences from the acquaintance, allowing it was possible no more could be meant, and accordingly apprised her friends with whom she was

then resident, of the necessity she was under to postpone her journey home for a few days.

On Colonel Buhanun's return to his inn, he applied to the landlady as a much more rational being, who immediately recommended him to a lodging house near the baths, the mistress of which was a sensible woman, and where he and his suite were very soon at home, congratulating himself on his escape from the widow Feversham.

Although Mrs. Betty, who had been brought up by Mrs. Feversham, retained from habit a kind of respect and regard for her, she was, she confessed, quite flustered at the idea of her interference in those domestic arrangements of her master, which, she thought, could not be in better hands than her own; and with respect to Rosa,—who could take more care of her than she did herself? The Colonel's return, therefore, from Mrs. Feversham's, and proceeding to settle himself, without once mentioning her name, was very agreeable to Mrs. Betty, and she was congratulating Mr.

John

John and herself on the event, when a rap at the door, followed by Mrs. Feversham's loud voice, put to rout a number of agreeables; and she hastened to pay her duty, where indeed it was very much due, while John announced the visiter to his master.

Sir Solomon Mushroom, who we left at Penry full of professions, respect, and friendship for Colonel Buhanun, no sooner heard that the village was cleared from so impertinent an inhabitant, than he posted to London, burning with curiosity, and full of half formed plans, dependant on the ifs that induced him to lay out half-a-crown on a doll for the beggar.

"Colonel Buhanun," said he, as he approached the India-house; "I never heard of the name; I don't believe he is a Colonel." But what said Mr. Mellish, one of the first clerks at the India-house, who had the honor, being very rich, to be ranked in the number of Sir Solomon Mushroom's particular friends.

"Colonel Buhanun is an officer of the most distinguished character: the military skill and personal bravery that alone has

advanced him in a few years to his present rank, is not more conspicuous, or more generally respected, than the honour of his principles and the generosity of his heart."

So then, thought our Knight, the story of that prating wench is all false; my mind misgave me so; yet he ventured to slide in a half question; "As the world was very malicious, whether something had not been whispered of about?"

Mr. Mellish interrupted him, "The duel, he presumed?"

The Knight actually coloured. "Yes, the duel,—to be sure, the duel."

"It was," Mr. Mellish said, "an unfortunate affair; yet the Colonel's honour and character were never impeached; and the ill fated nobleman had declared, before he died, he was himself the aggressor."

Oh ho, thought Sir Knight, then there was a murder. "And so then the Colonel?" said he with eagerness.

Mr. Mellish was sorry he could not tell his friend, Sir Solomon, all the particulars; as in fact the duel itself, with the exculpation of the Colonel's

Colonel's character, was all that had been spoken of at the India-house.

Though this account, in the light it now stood, was by no means of a complexion to gratify our inquirer; he was, though disappointed, all ear when Mr. Mellish declared, no man in the service was more justly esteemed by the directors; nor was there one to whose interest or recommendation they would pay greater respect.

There remained now but one question more to finish Sir Solomon's inquiry; that one, however, like Aaron's rod swallowed all the rest. "Was the Colonel rich?"

Mr. Mellish's answer, "That he was thought to be so," satisfied Sir Solomon, who returned to Penry; to write a letter to the Colonel, in which he begged to be remembered to sweet Miss Rosy; to busy himself in bringing to maturity certain vague designs not exactly in season to impart to our readers at this period of the beggar's history; and to prove the great interest he took in every thing that concerned his friends, by explaining to Mrs. Feversham his motives for giving her address to his late worthy neighbour, and

warmly recommending to her kindness, "the prettiest little creature in the world," whom the good Colonel had taken under his protection, and meaning to adopt, wished to educate.

His letters arrived the morning after the Colonel's visit in Bladud-Buildings; and Mrs. Feversham, who, next to being a great beauty, and a great wit, loved of all things to advise, direct, patronise, and recommend, ordered a chair to the inn, where she not only learned the Colonel's residence; but on inquiring about his suite, the whole story of the Beggar Girl, as it was brought there from the Devizes, and confirmed under seal of secrecy by Mrs. Betty.

From thence Mrs. Feversham proceeded to Miss Gueft, Mr. Rauzzini, Miss Fleming, and Mr. Didier, who were severally requested to follow her to the South Parade, to Colonel Buhanun's; for although Mrs. Feversham had certainly gone through the first rudiments of learning, at the usual period, herself, and therefore could not be ignorant that A B C was a necessary prelude to the instruction of the able teachers she was in such haste to engage. She was too much on

stilt to consider, it was possible a beggar might not be prepared for music, singing, dancing, and the languages, and too confident of the impression she had made on the Colonel, to doubt his implicit respect to her opinion.

After an arrangement so very clever, how could Mrs. Feversham fail, to be both surprised and enraged, when John entered with his master's respects, "being a very retired man in ill health and bad spirits, hoped Mrs. Feversham would pardon his declining to give her any trouble."

Was this treatment for a fine, a sensible, a managing woman to bear with any tolerable degree of patience? Mrs. Feversham could not credit her faculty of hearing; she made John repeat the passage over and over, which he did with a solemn precision, as provoking in exactitude, even to a syllable; as the unprecedented rudeness of his master.

"What! after she had, on purpose to oblige her friend, Sir Solomon Mushroom, and to serve Colonel Buhanun postponed her return to Penry, where her affairs absolutely

required her presence; after she had taken the trouble to call on several of the most eminent people in the teaching line, and prevailed on them to undertake the instruction of his beggar!"

John stared; he knew how anxious his master was to conceal the origin of his favourite. Mrs. Feversham's lungs were unimpaired by forty years wear. The word beggar echoed from the parlour to the hall, and was scarce uttered when the gentlemen and ladies she had appointed were let in.

John instantly retreated from "the presence," to inform his master of what was going forward, "This is the lady, Sir," said he, with an air of disgust, and his arm in more than common motion, whose

"Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,

"Misprising what they look on; and her wit

"Values itself so highly, that to her

"All matters else seems weak."

Colonel Buhanun now recollected how natural it was for his friend Sir Solomon, to write in favour of his protégée, to a lady who, as he said, "managed every body's affairs but

but her own ;” and though he thought her a most disagreeable visionary, with whom it was impossible for him to be in any habits of acquaintance, without imposing a most painful penance on himself ; yet the trouble she had, he allowed, taken, at the request, he doubted not, of Sir Solomon Mushroom, officious indeed, but perhaps well meant, as well as her sex, entitled her to politeness ; and though he fully resolved, one interview should answer every purpose, he had also a great deal at heart, to engage her secrecy, in respect to the beggarly origin of a child whom he began to love and consider as his own.

“ Friend, John,” said he, “ thy quotation is apposite ; but the evils we cannot shun, we must——”

“ True, Sir,” interrupted John, with a bow that said, ‘ I beg your honour’s pardon.’

“ Extremity is the trier of spirits,”
And this lady

“ Speaks an infinite deal of nothing ;”
Her

“ Reasons are as to two grains hid in two bushels of chaff, you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.”

The Colonel smiled. Now be it understood that the cast of this gentleman's countenance was so truly set for the endurance of grief, so pregnant with melancholy, so void of hope, so expressive of despair, that a smile, indicative of joy, would rather have distorted than graced the bent brow, on which however, the smile of benevolence beamed with ineffable sweetness; such a smile it was, that followed the quotations of his servant, and still irradiated his habitual gloom, when he entered the room where Mrs. Feversham was amusing her audience with an account of the great obligations she had conferred on this brute of a Colonel, and the ungrateful returns he was making.

His presence, however, silenced her: There was a dignity in his person and manner, that notwithstanding the penserosa which pervaded every action, inspired respect, and invited confidence; he apologised with frankness to Mrs. Feversham; whose resentful looks being a little mollified, she severally introduced her company. Miss Guest, as the first instructress on the piano forte; Mr. Rauzzini,

Rauzzini, as a divine Italian singer; Mr. Didier, as perfect master of languages; and Miss Flemming, as a dancing mistress, who, attended every person of fashion that visited Bath.

The Colonel again smiled, and bowing with politeness to each, rang for Rosa.

The appearance of the child, for whom such great arrangements were forming, was not calculated to make that first sight impression on strangers which has been time out of mind the exclusive privilege of novel heroines. The extreme lightness of her form had indeed preserved her from the actual deformity of rickets, and her limbs were straight; but the weakness, which is the certain consequence of bad nursing, had given a most ungraceful waddle to her gait. She was very small both in feature and stature. Her hair, which had all been consigned to the scissars, was but just beginning to grow, and what little she had, totally hid by a thick muslin cap, with red ribbons, as little favourable to the contour of her face as the gawdy large pattern chintz frock was to her person. She was very shy
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of notice, and crept close to her patron with such visible confusion, that Mrs. Feversham could with great difficulty conceal either her surprise or disgust, and actually did repeat Sir Solomon's "Prettiest little creature in the world," with a tolerable proportion of sarcastic severity.

"Don't be frightened, Miss Rosa," said John, as he took the poker to stir the fire.

"These ladies and gentlemen," said the Colonel, "will comprehend I can mean *them* no disrespect in declining their services, when they are told my little girl is yet ignorant of the alphabet."

"My God!" exclaimed Mrs. Feversham; "why, I dare say she is at least eight or nine years old."

"This," continued the Colonel, not attending to her exclamation, "has led you, madam, into the mistake, which I exceedingly regret."

The ladies and gentlemen, whose natural good sense had been improved by an intercourse with the polite world, took leave with
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the respect due to a person of the Colonel's rank and reputed riches, and a compliment to Mrs. Feversham for her intention, that a little reconciled her to the mortification of the morning.

The Colonel and the fair widow were now again tête-à-tête, as Rosa had gladly escaped out of the room.

The lady having, with extreme mortification, perceived that the effect of her charms was not in the train she expected, and that her great wit would be thrown away on so odd and frightful a being, prudently turned her thought to the part of the business still within her grasp, and with frankness, as she was often pleased to call ill manners, asked, "What could possibly be done with such a little ignorant thing, who had lost so much time?"

The Colonel hesitated.

"But before I say another word," added the widow, "what do *you* intend to do *for* her? do you mean to bring her up as an object of charity? because, if so, there are cheap schools enough, where she may be made useful;

ful; nay, I would, indeed, to oblige you, take her under my own eye; I taught that girl, Betty, all she knows; that is my way; I always make servants. Or do you mean to adopt her? You must in that case have proper people; indeed I think, if she were put under the care of some sensible woman; what I mean by that, is a woman of the world; one who knows men and things, who——”

The Colonel abruptly rising, said, he would consider, and with a return of the unfortunate tremor on his voice, added, that in the mean time he would thank her to forget the poor child was in existence; desired his compliments to Sir Solomon Mushroom; wished her a pleasant journey to Penry; and left the room.

Again was the poor widow surprised and disappointed. It was necessity, not inclination, that condemned her to return to Penry; where, excepting her empty house, she had no affairs that *absolutely required her presence*. Her friend at Bath, who was a lady of character and fortune, had borne with her, while her house was let, from a motive of benevolent liberality;

liberality; but the visit had already exceeded the term of invitation; and as the time of her return had been fixed, and she had received a very handsome parting present from her hostess, she could not, with any face, continue longer there. But her ideas had, with a rapidity that was natural to her, fixed on the Colonel, as one who, having great fortune and small sense, might very properly benefit her by his superfluities, while he and his beggar might, in return, share the great advantage of her superior understanding.

This was a grand design, and like many other grand designs, easier planned than executed; but loth so soon to relinquish hopes on which both vanity and interest rested, she sent for Mrs. Betty, and interrogated her in respect to her master's humour, disposition, intentions towards Rosa, and finally, what he was worth.

Betty had been taught every thing by Mrs. Feversham; she had an instinctive penetration when her own interest was at stake, that rendered her more than a match for her mistress; she had been indeed too long in absolute

solute possession of all the authority and advantage of government herself, to think with patience of any innovation or alteration; and accordingly took care so to frame her answers as to add to Mrs. Feversham's dislike of her master, and contempt of his protégé; nor did she fail to enforce the extreme positive obstinacy of his character, which, right or wrong, made him persist in whatever whim he took in his head; meaning, no doubt, to convince her mistress, that his parting with her was final.

If ladies, who covet power they never possess; who fancy conquests they never make; and whose glasses talk to them in apocrypha; would but consider, when they confide secrets that exist only in their own pretty ideas, to the bosom of a friend, how many little embarrassing inventions must follow, to support the first sacrifice of truth to vanity, they would for their own sakes perhaps be more moderate.

Mrs. Feversham had, in the triumph of her heart, after Colonel Buhanun's first visit, repeated a thousand civil things he never said,
which,

which, if not an absolute declaration of love, amounted to all but — She had affected to ask advice in regard to her acceptance of so brilliant a settlement. She had also, on the receipt of Sir Solomon Mushroom's letter, given the contents an air of the utmost importance, and had received from her friend, the names of the people she had so prematurely directed to attend her at the Colonel's.

Lady Harwood, the respected wife of a general officer, now abroad, of liberal mind and moderate fortune, exhibited the strongest marks of surprise, and even incredulity, when Mrs. Feverham made her the confidante of her conquest. Buhanun was a name to which her ears had once been familiar; but it was also so common, and filled so many different ranks and departments, abroad and at home, and the person with whom she had formerly been acquainted, who bore it, was so unlike what our Colonel was described, that her surprise was merely the effect of an association of ideas, which separated as Mrs. Feverham's story increased in credit.

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On the strength of this new conquest, Lady Harwood had not only invited, but advised Mrs. Feversham's continuance some time longer at Bath.

What, in such a predicament, could poor Mrs. Feversham do? Confess to the only relation of her deceased husband, who noticed her, the ridiculous vanity by which she had been so compleatly self deceived; allow that her beauty and wit had not only failed to attract, but was treated with every mark of disgust? No that was impossible; and Mrs. Feversham, who was on such familiar habit with truth, that she sacrificed it without ceremony on all occasions to vanity, had, in passing the small space of ground between the South Parade and Bladud's-Buildings, made up her story.

In the first place, on a second interview with the rich nabob, she had found him so ugly, so disagreeable, vulgar and low bred, so unlike her dear lamented Mr. Feversham, and so totally unworthy to succeed that good man, that notwithstanding his great wealth, and her narrow income, she had found it impossible

possible to bring her mind to accept his *offered* hand.

This Lady Harwood, from her own feelings, readily allowed to be natural.

Secondly, the Beggar Girl, as she was represented, but who, as she believed in her conscience, was his own bastard, by some dirty drab or other, was a little bold, vulgar looking thing, so ignorant that it would be impossible to make any thing of her.

And lastly, in order to avoid the importunities of the horrid Colonel, and excuse herself to Sir Solomon Mushroom, her rich neighbour, for declining to trouble herself with the low born adoption, she would resume her design of quitting Bath immediately.

As Lady Harwood could not suggest an inducement for any misrepresentation on the part of her guest; and as her own heart coincided in the objections to a second choice, she applauded both motive and act; a place was accordingly taken in the next two-day coach, and every preparation made for her departure.

Mrs.

Mrs. Betty, who, when her own interest was secure, could not divest herself of an habitual respect for her former mistress, called at Lady Harwood's, to pay her duty, and hearing she was in the way to be freed from the apprehended interference, was profuse in professions of attachment, and regret at parting with so *good* a lady; and as Mrs. Feversham was a little sore about her preferring the servitude of Colonel Buhanun to her's, engaged to return to her place when the blackamoor Colonel left England.

Lady Harwood's only daughter, about twelve years of age, was attended by her mother's favourite maid, a prim damsel of forty, who, for the honour of her lady's house, invited Mrs. Betty to tea, partly out of respect to Mrs. Feversham, but principally to indulge her own curiosity, and amuse Miss Harwood with a full and true account of the little Beggar Girl, which she not only got from her voluble visitor, but a promise to let her and Miss see the object of their curiosity, when Mrs. Hannah should return Mrs. Betty's visit.

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This happened sooner than either party expected; for Lady Harwood hearing a rumour of some news that had arrived from the West-Indies, where Sir Charles was, set off for Bristol within a few hours after Mrs. Feversham left her; and her absence giving Mrs. Hannah and Miss opportunity, Rosa was, for the first time in her life, introduced to a play fellow of her own sex.

The life and spirit of Miss Harwood, who under the eye of the best of mothers, had made a rapid progress in female attainments, could not fail to over awe Rosa.

She was a tall well grown girl, a little spoiled by indulgence, but perfectly good natured; and the eager curiosity which the history of our little beggar first raised, soon changed into a warmer sentiment. Proud of her own superiority, she undertook to instruct her new acquaintance; and Mrs. Hannah, an abigail of great taste in hats, caps, gowns and bonnets, affected an equal interest in the improvement of her new friend, Mrs. Betty; so that before the Colonel had made
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up his mind to the arrangements necessary for the commencement of the education he wished to give Rosa, she had become a great proficient in the first rudiments of all learning, under the tuition of Miss Belinda Harwood, and a very well dressed little belle under the direction of Mrs. Hannah.

Mrs. Betty's own taste reformed, or rather *new* formed; she made a very liberal use of the Colonel's unlimited orders to buy for Rosa every thing *she wanted*; which *now* implied every thing fashionable and expensive.

The flowered frocks were discarded for fine muslin ones, made at the milliners. A profusion of hats, caps, fashies, and shoes, en suite, succeeded so rapidly, that Mrs. Betty and her charge were very soon the best dressed Miss and maid that walked the crescent fields.

The gloomy and hopeless state of mind in which we found Colonel Buhanun, at the beginning of the beggar's history, had, imperceptibly to himself, gradually changed; from the hour he determined to protect the child of misery, all the blessings which under heaven he conferred on her reveberated on his
own

own feelings ; and as often as he contemplated her interesting countenance, he congratulated himself on saving a female from probable destruction, the lineaments of whose features, and even the sound of whose voice, played on his delighted fancy, at the same moment that they renewed the agonizing memory of persons and scenes it was his wish, but not his hope, to forget. It was he knew, chance that had given to his protégée the resemblance so interesting to him ; for no kind of affinity could in the remotest degree possibly subsist between the child of such parents, and those of whom she continually reminded him ; yet his mind once impressed with the idea, her claims on his tenderness encreased every hour ; and happily for Rosa, he now discovered, while employed in the constant exercise of generous benevolence towards her, that life, though deprived of its earliest dearest hope, might not only be endured, but enjoyed.

The time usually devoted to infantine instruction indeed was passed ; but Colonel Buhanun, like the generality of his countrymen, was a clas-

fical scholar, and perfectly understood the advantage of having nothing to *unlearn*; he engaged a teacher of eminence to live in the house with him; and the first rudiments of Rosa's education, excepting only those she received from Miss Harwood, being taught by a gentleman of science, her language became polished, and her pronunciation perfectly just. The Colonel, equally delighted and amused by an avocation that gratified his feeling heart, was a constant assistant to her preceptor, and perceived, with infinite satisfaction, her hourly improvement. The emulation so fortunately raised by her acquaintance with Miss Harwood, which, with permission of that young lady's mamma, she was allowed to cultivate, was no small advantage; and the peculiar delicacy of her ear soon taught her to reject all vulgarisms in her common conversation, and to adopt the smooth and polite phrases which she heard from her benefactor and well-bred tutor. The Colonel indeed was not only a good scholar, but a perfect gentleman. Every reader will not, perhaps comprehend, how a person educated at

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the college of Edinburgh, in the tenets of the kirk of Scotland, could preserve his devout integrity, and yet be addicted to profane swearing; and it may be still more difficult to explain how a custom, which in common minds, is the proof, of rancour, barbarism, and vulgarity, should in his be the result of excessive feeling and humanity; but the irritability of his temper, which originated in certain bitter recollections of past events, subsided as he felt the reward of his disinterested benevolence in the very letter of the act; and the apathy with which he had considered all the futurities of his mortal existence was no more; he no longer thought with indifference of that progress of passing time that would return him to his duty, nor of that more solemn event which must leave Rosa wholly unprotected; and how to dispose of her at present, and provide for her in future, was the subject of many an hour of painful meditation.

How infinitely different were the six months now passed at Bath, with Rosa to educate, to improve, to doat on, from those which had last year been devoted to the recovery of

health he did not value, and the prolongation of an existence of which he was weary.

What ever was the secret cause of that grief, that distaste of life, that hopeless sorrow, that agonized sensibility, which had for years been the predominate feature in his character, the effect was, at least for the present, suspended. Time no longer lagged on leaden pinions,—it flew, it vanished, and the period when he must actually leave England, or resign his commission, was within one month of expiration before he could resolve to think it must be; for as to leaving the service during the war, that was an act his honour and his courage equally forbid; yet to part with Rosa;—to tear from his mind that soothing, that delightful new found antidote against long endured anguish;—to leave a mind so docile, so gentle, so sensible, and yet so strong, that he had begun to fear the little weak tenement of clay which inclosed it was not destined long to contain so capacious a resident; to leave it exposed to sufferings his presence might avert, the idea became every moment more and more painful; one
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of the apprehended evils however, gradually vanished, and a short time proved, whatever perfections he discovered in her mind, her person bid fair to equal.

Regular diet, exercise, and chearfulness, gave by degrees a tint to her complexion equally delicate and blooming; the fallow sickly hue was no more, the cheeks which meagre want had pinched filled out to the exact line of beauty, and their animated glow added a brilliancy to her melting hazzle eyes, which seemed to dart their dazzling beams through long silken eyes lashes in all directions; her brow was not exactly a penciled arch, but far more pleasing, and some shades more dark than the soft auburn, or rather chesnut hair that already defied the caps confinement, and shaded her fair neck and forehead; her features, though regular, were more touching than striking, and her mouth had a dimpled fascination about it, that even in her mendicant state was irresistible.

The form of her person altered with the improvement of her countenance; an easy elegance superceded the defect in her carriage;

her ivory neck was supported by shoulders that seemed to fall with every movement; she grew tall, and gave every promise that her maturity would be beauty formed by the graces: so at least thought the partial Colonel; and the child he raised from ignorance, weakness, and misery, became at once the object of his affectionate admiration, and that source of delightful amusement.

The regiment he commanded was stationed so far up the country, that at Calcutta she would be as much out of his immediate protection as in England; to take her to camp with him was impossible, and to part with her—agony.

There were at Bath several families who had courted his acquaintance in India, and who would gladly have paid the same respect to his character wherever he was; but a discovery of the claims of his young favorite, on his affection and care, had, while it excited general curiosity, failed to excite as general compassion.

Mrs.

Mrs. Betty walked with Miss Rosa in the Crescent-fields whenever Mrs. Hannah walked with her Miss. Lady Harwood admired the sweet mildness of Rosa's disposition; and hearing from her servant such prodigies of her aptitude, and good temper, condescended to examine and approve of the rapid progress she was making in her education; and not only allowed Miss Harwood to be often with her, but recommended her amiable manners to her daughter's imitation; but there were not many Lady Harwood's at Bath.

The story of the beggar got abroad; every body was anxious to know the particulars of so extraordinary a circumstance; and to do Mrs. Betty justice, every body's curiosity was amply gratified.

John was always in the habit and humour of punctually obeying his master; he was a long while mute, when the gentlemen's gentlemen wished to draw him into conversation; but when he found Rosa's history was a secret every body knew, he acquainted the Colonel with the state of the matter, add-

ing, in a low voice, and his right arm at hard work,

“ So shines good deeds in a naughty world ; ”

And thus, your honour,

“ The wise man’s folly is anatomized,

“ Even by the squandering glance of a fool.”

And though

“ This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever

“ Ran on the green sod ; nothing she does or seems,

“ But snacks of something greater than herself.”

“ _____ What king so strong

“ Can tie up the gall in slanderous tongues.”

And he concluded by declaring he believed it was discovered by witchcraft.

Colonel Buhanun, vexed, mortified, and disconcerted, laid, in his own mind, the whole blame on Mrs. Feversham ; and Lady Harwood being her intimate friend, was an insuperable bar to his acquaintance with her ; it was not, he thought, in nature for a reasonable being to be in habits of friendship with one so absurd and ridiculous ; and his aversion to her increased on hearing a thousand silly anecdotes of ladies and misses, who sneered, scorned, or laughed at his little beggar.

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But while the Colonel's affections were more bound to Rosa, as he found she was despised by others, time advanced with unaltered pace ; a month, a little month, only remained, before he must leave her to that hard, that pitiless world he had long inured his soul to abhor ; and his anguish and regret grew every hour more insupportable.

The Colonel had been civil, nay pleased with Sir Solomon Mushroom previous to his leaving Penry. Had the Knight asked for a thousand pound or two, or double the sum, as a loan, the Colonel would have parted with it without inquiring about security ; and this, according to some, and perhaps most people, was the refinement of friendship. But if any eccentric readers should ask about those feelings,

“ That generous friendship, which no cold medium knows,

“ Warm with one love, with one resentment glows,

we must be so sincere as to say, nothing of the kind existed in the bosom of Colonel Buhanun towards Sir Solomon Mushroom, not even when having wearied himself with arranging and disarranging plans for Rosa

during his absence, he resolved to leave Bath, in order to take his advice as a man whose judgment he thought was as good, and whose knowledge of the world, was much better than his own.

John's mind was little less agitated than his master's, when he received order to pack up. He had employed many of his leisure hours in calculations of how many weeks, days, hours, and even minutes he had to be fellow servant with Mrs. Betty, while that provident girl, who calculated as well in her way, and knew the exact progress she was making in his affection, busied her active mind about the future management of the White Horse, little suspecting the impending blow which threatened to crush all her hope for ever.

CHAP. VII.

“What is the life of man? is it not to shift from sorrow to sorrow? to button up one cause of vexation and unbutton another?”

HAD Sir Solomon Mushroom been apprised of the time when the Colonel and his suite would have arrived, he would, he said, have been in waiting at the hotel, in hope to prevail on him to make his poor house his home; but he was not; and the Colonel being settled before he sent his card, there was an end of every thing on that head but professions.

Sir Solomon's joy was unbounded; and what was extraordinary, it was sincere. He was going to the House of Commons, but

engaged to return to dine. His prancing horses then drove off, and our Colonel jolted in a hackney coach to Leadenhall-street, where he made his bow, and heard he had but a few days to settle a thousand affairs, he returned to the hotel fatigued, out of spirits, and out of humour.

"Oh what a sweet doll, papa," cried Rosa, holding up a fine dressed wax figure; "did you ever see any thing so pretty? and who do you think gave it me? that Sir something I forget; but he says he is coming to see you, and he will come every day, and bring me more dolls, if you let him; do, papa, let him; and he says, I must love *him* when you are gone; but you won't go; you won't leave your poor Rosa, will you?"

Tears swam in Rosa's eyes; the Colonel sighed, and ashamed of the want of resolution that had retarded the determination on which he had no longer time to hesitate, retired to his room, and rang for John.

"Well, friend John," said he, "I have finished my business, and given orders for expediting every thing."

Your

"Your honour lets no grass grow under your feet when to march is the word."

John sighed as he finished his sentence. He had with great difficulty concealed a very heavy heart from Mrs. Betty, who reckoning on his melancholy, as a proof of increasing affection, carolled away, "Sweet passion of love," with one eye on John, and the other on the White-Horse.

"All," continued the Colonel, without raising his eye, or changing his posture, "but that which most interests me; poor little Rosa, what can I do with her?"

"Betty, and please your honour," said John; "Betty is a very good, trusty, sober, faithful young woman."

"I know thou thinkest so, friend John, but——"

"Please your honour," said John, raising on tiptoe, and putting out the pleated frill of his shirt, "if a man who has the honour to be a soldier, and to serve a gentleman, and who regards his word, may venture to assert any

any thing positive respecting another; I know so,

"There is no art to find the mind's construction in the face,"

To be sure; and

"There is no vice so simple, but assumes some mark of virtue on its outward garb;"

But——"

"I will not doubt thee, John, nor thy friend Betty; but if I retain her to attend and take personal care of my Rosa, where shall I place them? who will take charge of her mind? a mind that opens into sweetness and sensibility."

John hesitated; after a pause, "I confess," said he, rubbing his forehead,

"—— women are not

"In their best fortunes strong."

And

"—— want will perjure

"The untouched vestal."

But as he would leave all his Shakespeares with Mrs. Betty, and as in them there were lessons for all ranks, sorts, and sizes; rich and poor; young and old; high and low——"

"Does Betty study Shakespeare?" asked the Colonel, with a smile that had more grief than curiosity in it.

“ She has promised to begin your honour; but as I know how short a time I have to teach her, I have not the heart.”

“ And yet I have known thine a very stout heart, John.”

“ Ah, your honour, the heart to face a foe, and the heart to leave a friend, are—”

“ Very different,” sighed the Colonel; “but Rosa; what shall I do with poor Rosa?”

Sir Solomon was that moment announced, and the Colonel, on entering the sitting room, found him on the best terms with Rosa, who sat on his knee, talking about her doll.

Sir Solomon was overpowered with joy to see the Colonel, and with sorrow to hear how soon he was to leave England; wished he would favour him with any command; nothing on earth could make him so happy as to be of the smallest service, and hoped he might be permitted now and then to visit his sweet little friend, Miss Rosa.

The Colonel having sent Rosa away, communicated, without reserve, the difficulties he was under about settling her; the regret he felt at parting with her; and the handsome things, in point of fortune, he meant to do for her.

Sir Solomon's superior wisdom never shone with more splendour than at this moment; he inwardly laughed at the silly Colonel, and his foolish distress, while with affected solemnity he lamented the loss the sweet little creature would sustain; and after a short pause, during which every motion of his countenance was eagerly watched by the Colonel, suggested the only proper and ready asylum for a child in her situation, which had the Colonel been at all in the habits of society, or the custom of the world, must have occurred to himself, namely, a boarding-school.

Sir Solomon went farther; he had, he said, two orphan nieces, whom he was educating at Mount Pleasant, a boarding-school within two mile of Penry, kept by a lady whose character and example were equal vouchers for her eligibility to the undertaking.

The Colonel was instantly struck with the propriety of the plan; for which he thanked Sir Solomon with an earnestness that proved how much his mind was interested in the happiness of his favourite.

Sir

Sir Solomon was all good nature and politeness; he not only recommended the school, but offered to take on himself the charge of arranging every thing for the Colonel, even to paying the bills in his absence, and, in short, to treat Rosa as a third niece.

Now then it was when that same feeling which warms the generous heart, and fills it with sympathy and affection, for an object it both loves and respects; now it was that the Colonel's soul gushed in torrents from his eyes, to greet Sir Solomon Mushroom as the *friend* of his soul.

Sir Solomon was affected also, really affected, by the silent grace with which Colonel Buhanun put into his hand a small red case, containing a few remembrances of Abraham Newland, to the amount of two thousand pound, for which he offered, but for which the Colonel absolutely refused to take, an acknowledgement.

"Mcney, Sir," said the noble minded Buhanun, "is the god of dishonour. Ah! (striking his breast) what reason have I not to despise

despise it ; yet now, when for this child's sake it becomes of value to me,—now when I am half tempted to be a miser, do I not commit to your honour, your humanity, that dearer trust who will inherit my little all."

Sir Solomon's handkerchief was applied to his face, certainly to conceal emotions, but of what nature the author sayeth not.

Dinner passed with an increase of esteem and warmth on the part of our Colonel, who having given the reins to confidence, overflowed with the milk of human kindness ; and the Knight took his leave at an early hour, with a profusion of professions of all sorts of friendship.

John was immediately summoned to partake of his master's tranquil satisfaction.

But an incident had forestalled the intelligence, and turned poor John's mind topsy-turvy. This was no other than a new edition of Mrs. Betty's favourite experiment on the key-hole of the door, when her gentle mind was disturbed by a desire of knowing any

any particular thing, which appearances proved was not designed to be committed to her discretion.

When Colonel Buhanun's mind was in a state of irritation or agitation, he had an invariable custom of traversing whatever apartment he happened to be in, with a velocity in his paces in perfect unison with his internal feelings.

Now when John was before summoned, this was precisely the case; and as there had of late certainly been something extraordinary in the manner of both master and man, it was not in Mrs. Betty's nature to resist the incitements of curiosity; she advanced towards the scene of action, with all possible precaution, and removing the powdered curl which now adorned her smart head dress, was a second time ear witness to a conversation that had for its subject the total subversion of all her happiness, present and expectant.

In all Betty's provident schemes of future greatness, since John had dropped the hint of taking a clever manager to the White Horse,

Horse, the pretty bar that fronted two roads, with an arch over the seat in the middle, decorated all around, above and below, with bright decanters, glasses, and china bowls; was the dear vision that insinuated itself into all her waking dreams, which by constantly indulging, she had brought to such a certainty of seeing realized, that she had communicated it to her friends as a settled thing, that whenever it should please God to release old Parker from his pain, she should be landlady of the White Horse; in consequence of which, she received from them a regular account of the progress of a disease that must sooner or later leave the White-Horse, and all the desirables about it, to another landlord.

But heaven and earth! here was a discovery! here was a disaster! that not only dropped the scene on all the train of greatness she had set down as her absolute right, but exposed her to the ridicule of her confidants, and would most probably oblige her to seek a fresh service, where she must have

a mistress, instead of being one ; to say nothing of the loss of a lover.

Brimful of indignation, scorn, anger, regret, and all the tormenting sensations, that, from the duchess to the dairy maid, agitate the female heart, when a lover, who, whether they like too much or too little, is on the point of slipping that chain which interest, affection, or caprice would link with adamant. Not a breath stirred, not a door moved on the hinge ; but Betty was all eye and all ear ; and while John was busy arranging the things in the eating-room, she had the good fortune to return unobserved to her station at the key-hole, in the critical minute when the future settlement of Rosa was so adroitly fixed by Sir Solomon Mushroom, in direct subversion of the interest John had been making for her.

“ Very pretty indeed ! ” said Mrs. Betty, wiping the tear of vexation from her scarlet cheek, “ and so after making myself a slave to this beggar, after soiling my fingers in cleaning her from her filth and nasty rags ; after going to Bath, merely to oblige my
master,

master, and trotting after his little beggar from place to place, for nothing in the world but a little wages and a few presents, I am to be fobbed off in this manner, with a month's wages I suppose, at the discretion of that old bag of meaness and deceit, Sir Solomon Mushroom; and Mr. John, too, with his honesty and probity, and fine speeches out of books, and his flimflams, a pargury villain.

Mrs. Betty's passion was now rather before hand with her veracity; for though John certainly did love her, and had once hinted his idea of settling at Penry one day or other, yet as his master's return to India was as fixed as his resolution to live and die near him, he had too much integrity to give hopes he did not intend to realize; and all his perjuries were the meanings she chose herself to put on his obliging, attentive, and affectionate behaviour; once indeed, after a warm embrace, he did swear he never had such a regard for woman before; that while he had a shilling she should not want sixpence; but as to the holy ordinance of marriage, and the etcetra's she had so compleatly
fixed

fixed in her own mind, they had never entered *his*.

With pale cheek, quivering lip, and inflamed eyes, Mrs. Betty sat down to dinner.

An appearance so unusual would undoubtedly have excited the observation of John, had not his faculties been all absorbed in the pain of the approaching separation.

"Soh, Mr. John, at last," said Betty with an hysterical sob, "you are going beyond sea, I find."

John was not prepared for the attack; altho' as the time of parting drew near, he was anxious to break a matter to her, that, judging by his own feelings, and her many proofs of good will, he could not but expect would be very distressing. He laid down his knife and fork, and fixed his eyes on the fire.

The flood-gates of Betty's eyes gave way; torrents of tears rolled down her cheeks, and John in vain endeavoured to sooth and pacify her, till, as the last effort to console the afflicted damsel, he made the declaration she had so long anticipated, and swore he loved her more than any earthly being, but his
king,

king, and his master, and that if he lived to come back, he would, with God's good leave and blessing, make her his lawful wife.

Betty's tears flowed faster than ever; all the tenderness and vows of affection which John, with an aching heart uttered, in hope to reconcile her to that which fate ordained, seemed to have a contrary effect; as how indeed could it be otherwise, considering how soon old Parker was expected to die, and that instead of stepping out of service into the snug bar, with a neat hand-bell before her, she was in danger of waiting on herself as long as she lived; for as to remaining in a comfortless state of celibacy till the war was over, indeed she had no notion of that.

As this source of grief was unsuspected by John, he could only attribute it to an excess of that tenderness which filled his own heart, and he so kindly sympathised with her, that his tears flowed as fast as hers, and his sighs were quite as audible, and some what more sincere.

In

In such a moment, with the fair mourner in his arms, her head reclined on his bosom, protestations of love on one side, answered by threats of despair on the other, no wonder his master's bell had thrice rung, without power to rouse the tender lovers from the grief into which they were plunged.

The Colonel, who disliked being attended by the waiters of the hotel, went himself to enquire for his servant, and entered the room appropriated to his people's use, without being perceived.

What a sight were two weeping, despairing lovers to a man of his sensibility, on whom the sorrows of the tender passion had more effect, than any other ill to which man is heir.

Up started John, taking care nevertheless to remove the head of the weeping damsel gently from his bosom.

The Colonel faltered out something about a bottle of claret, and retired.

John tried to rub off the redness from his eyes, and made them more red. Instead of claret he drew the cork of a bottle of cherry
VOL. I. L brandy,

brandy, which had been given Mrs. Betty as a specific against fits, and carried it with trembling hands to his master.

The Colonel immediately found the mistake, and by a look signified it to his servant, who in his zeal to rectify one blunder committed half a dozen more.

"Mr. John," said Sir Solomon, looking significantly, "has been beginning to take leave, I fancy."

"Yes, your honour," answered John, with a flourish of his right arm which demolished a rummer on the sideboard,

"Dry sorrow hath drunk our blood."

The Colonel, as if roused from a reverie, told him he dispensed with any further attendance that day, and John returned to Betty.

The chief mate of the India ship, in which the Colonel had engaged his passage, who was from the north of the Tweed, waited on him early the next morning, to know if he would honour him with any commands; and happening to say, an old servant of a Captain Macpherson's, who had died in his passage home, wanted to return to India, the
Colonel

Colonel became rather inquisitive about his abilities and character.

One remark the reader may make through life, or he may, if he please, safely take it on the credit of others, No true Scotchman ever loses an opportunity of serving himself, or recommending a countryman; and a Scotchman who did not prefer a countryman, to any other claim whatever, would be an heterogeneous being.

“Is the man a Macpherson?” asked the Colonel.

“No, please your honour,” said John, with his usual apologising bow, for being so bold as to answer a question addressed to another, “his name is Buchan, James Buchan, he attended Captain Macpherson when your honour first went to India.”

“Thou knowest him, friend John?”

“Know him, your honour,—as well under favor as I know myself; he’s of

“The constant service of the antique world

“When service sweat for duty, not need.”

James will

“Do the service of a young man.”

The Colonel took his hat; he was going to visit Sir Solomon Mushroom, and asked the mate to walk part of the way with him.

Sir Solomon Mushroom, with whom the reader has yet but a kind of fashionable visiting acquaintance, was a man who would not only turn a guinea an hundred times before he would part with it, but turn, and turn, and turn again, before he ceased to worm himself into any connexion from which he saw a prospect of advantage. He was naturally of so industrious a spirit, that he never heard of money thrown away, as in the case of the blackamoor Colonel, without an ardent desire to be among the pickers up; never heard of an advantageous bargain, without longing to be purchaser; never was acquainted with a wealthy man from whom he did not get some crumbs of comfort; nor with a poor one whom he did not contrive to make more poor, and very hard, no doubt, it certainly would have been, had a gentleman lived on his manor, under, as he said, his own nose, by whom every individual in the neighbourhood

bourhood but himself, should, in some sort, be benefited; and that a few scattered guineas from a sickly, whimsical stranger, should place in camera obscura all the great qualities of a leige lord among his own vassals.

It was not possible for John to be in habits of cordial familiarity with the villagers of Penry, without hearing of the riches, the interest, the power, the rhetoric, the pride, rapacity, avarice, and tyranny of the Lord of the Manor. He had not indeed shocked the ears of his master with repetitions of all he was told, but had in general terms, at different times dropped, that the person who occupied the great house, and owned the fine park, was a hard master, an oppressive landlord, and a tool of ministry.

With the impression such a character could not fail to leave on the Colonel's mind, no wonder he was hard of access when the Knight so earnestly courted his acquaintance.

The fine spring morning on which this tale opens, was one of the first opportunities that had offered, for a personal trial, to compass what he had many times essayed by po-

lite messages, without success, during the occasional residence which his duty, as a pillar of the constitution allowed at Penry.

At Sir Solomon's elegant town residence, and sometimes at his villa, he gave entertainments as luxuriant and expensive as the most extravagant man of fashion of the age; but as these were an immolation of his dearest feelings, a sacrifice of avarice to show, which cost him many a bitter pang, he paid the strictest attention to every other part of his domestic out-goings.

Horace Littleton, the young man who presumed over half a glass of wine at the bottom of the table, to differ in opinion from the Knight over his bumper at the top, when the Colonel was found guilty of murder, was the object of Sir Solomon Mushroom's *charity*. The lad had been got rid of for a few years at a free grammar school in Wales, where the particular foundation on which he was placed, had given to his talents and ability all they wanted, "early instruction." When he was master of the dead languages, he had right to be sent to college; but be-
sides

sides that, this would be attended with some small expence in addition to the settled allowance from the foundation; it happened at a time when, unfortunately for the youth, Sir Solomon Mushroom, chusing to out-do himself in oratory, discovered in him some talents which he found at that period particularly useful. Horace was well read in ancient history; he was not only a reader of eloquence, but eloquent himself, and could write compositions with allusions to, and quotations from many authors, of whose names Sir Knight had never heard. These compositions, by help of a good memory, and great attention, Sir Solomon could so blend with his own local ideas, as to excite attention in the house, and form two columns in a daily paper, for the insertion of which, after a retouch by Horace, he very liberally paid.

Besides the honourable employment of speech making for a member of the British parliament, Horace was a kind of secretary, and steward at Penry; he answered all letters of business; collected rents, and kept a regular account of receipts and disbursements;

for all which services he had the run of the house, whole clothes, dined in the parlour, and was allowed the exclusive possession of an old library.

Mushroom-place, the *new old* mansion which had for ages nodded its proud turrets over the village of Penry, in superior grandeur and respect, was more properly new fronted than new built, as several grand apartments were yet standing behind the new erections, among which was this library.

As the only literary property, of any estimation in Sir Solomon's opinion, if indeed we do not except the gilt red morocco covered prayer-book in the manor-pew, were Journals of the Commons and Burn's Justice; the furniture of the old library, which he had claimed as part of the building, when it was knocked down to him, were as little valued as understood; and though to induce Horace to execute his task with good humour, it was necessary to be sometimes civil to him, yet the more wise Knight thought the old library and its occupier perfectly appropriate.

Horace

Horace had but just peeped into the world through the medium of his patron's conduct and disposition ; neither of which struck him as of half the value of one of the worm-eaten books moulding on the shelf of the old library ; he therefore left the former to what amendations heaven in its wisdom should please to ordain, and devoted all his leisure hours, to cleaning, arranging, and studying the contents of an apartment he was permitted to call his own.

If Colonel Buhanun had any political bias, it was anti-ministerial. No Scotchman had then been at the head of public affairs since the nobleman whose wisdom and private virtues endeared him to all who had the honour and happiness to know him, and rendered him the object of abuse to those who did not. When therefore he bestowed a thought on ministry, it was merely comparative ; too partial to the innate worth of his honoured countryman, to separate public conduct from private worth, he could not allow merit where it was perhaps conspicuously due.

Sir Solomon, was on his part, the slave of all who had the distribution of loaves and fishes. He had already amassed a princely fortune under the auspices of a nobleman high in office, and lived in daily hope of a continental war, when he might again be a commissary, and heap wealth on wealth. Relying on the entire ignorance of a man who *knew not the value of money*, he endeavoured to impress him with profound admiration of his talents as a speaker in the senate, and as the wisest of mortals out of it. He sent his own man to him with the political pamphlets on the side of ministry, and the important newspapers containing his own speeches, as soon as they were printed; in answer to all which, if the absolute Colonel returned any answer, it was a short phillipic against venality and corruption.

Venality and corruption! that was very good, from a man too who had made a fortune in India—ridiculous enough!

He had next proceeded to advise; but as all his tropes, metaphors, figures, and fine speaking could not, in the simple Colonel's idea, separate the wisdom of the orator from the

faults of the man, that too failed ; and the Colonel had continued to *throw away* his guineas in spite of remonstrance and advice, and this so increased the contempt of the great man, that it soon became downright hatred.

“ *Colonel Buhannun ; I never heard the name ; I don't believe he is a Colonel,*” quoth Sir Solomon. But the result of his enquiries at the India-house, where every clerk treated with respect that name of which he had never heard, had now wrought a sudden change in his sentiments ; we have seen his aversion to the man succeeded by a servile respect to his fortune and character ; and we have now introduced to the reader a book-loving youth, who kept accounts and wrote speeches.

This lad, kept as Sir Solomon declared, on charity, was of late become rather troublesome ; it was indeed whispered in the family, that he had claims on the Knight, of which he was himself but too sensible, and in consequence of some presumptuous conduct, had so far forfeited the favour of his patron, that he declared his resolution to bind him apprentice to some trade, whereby he might

earn his own living; but every proposal of the kind, and even the offer of being put in the train to be made an exciseman had been rejected by the youth with resentment and disdain.

Sir Solomon Mushroom imputed the ruin of young Horace to the old library, from which it was an Herculean labour to remove him. The young man who had seldom sixpence in his pocket, had indeed few temptations to go abroad; and his inactivity gave a fallow hue to his complexion, that took at least from his beauty, however it might improve his understanding.

But notwithstanding the indolence and ingratitude of his character, which was the constant topic of Sir Solomon's conversation in his absence, he had not ceased to treat him when present, with more respect than was apparently due to his situation; and the secret reasons for that implacable disgust, he now with great difficulty concealed, were these: Two young ladies who passed for the nieces of Sir Solomon, and had been brought up in habits of intimacy with Horace, had already, although the eldest was not seventeen, and the youngest

youngest not fifteen, betrayed certain symptoms of regard for the young man the reverse of disgust, which if indulged, threatened to overturn all the plans that had cost the wise Sir Solomon more than can be now explained, to bring about.

Sir Solomon, who had himself never been disturbed by any of those fine drawn feelings which revolt at betraying the confidence of innocence, saw the advantage that *might*, and *therefore*, he doubted not, *would* be taken, of a fondness, which, particularly in the eldest and favourite young lady, was every day more perceptible; he had even the penetration to discover a design to run away with one of his heiresses, was at the bottom of that pride in Horace, which produced, as he said, not only indolence but impertinence; and he determined, at the risk of his reputation for oratory, to get rid of so obnoxious an inmate, even if it cost him a few hundreds to do it; but the obstinacy of the sullen Horace had hitherto baffled all his schemes.

Sir

Sir Solomon was too wise to hint his apprehensions to the parties concerned, but resolved, from the moment he understood the Colonel's return to India was certain, and that he had interest to procure a situation, to which pride could not object for Horace, to make himself of such consequence to the former as should give him a right to ask a return of good offices.

He had balanced between avarice and fear, till a recent instance of Charlotte's increasing partiality roused him into action, and relying on the urbanity and generosity of the Colonel's temper, opened his designs on the morning in which this history now stands.

His introductory prelude, as was often the case with him, was a panegyric on the person, whom, next to the Colonel, he most hated. Horace was, he said, an orphan of family, left by a concurrence of strange events, pensioner on his charity. His abilities were so much above mediocrity, that it would have been barbarous to deprive them of the advantage of education. Few young men in any station could.

could in that respect equal him. Sir Solomon here heaved a profound sigh.

The Colonel, his whole heart open to the protector of Rosa, hoped he received the best reward true benevolence could receive, in the happiness of its object.

Sir Solomon hesitated; he turned his face away; he even drew out his pocket handkerchief, and sighed again.

The Colonel was all attention.

Still advancing under a masked battery, Sir Solomon proceeded only by hints and inuendos, to explain that the youth was incorrigibly idle, proud, vindictive, and treacherous; that he had endeavoured to stab the breast that had fostered him, by seducing the affections of his darling niece, and with that object in view, refused to accept of any situation out of the family.

With all the colourings of Sir Solomon there was something in this story that warmed the Colonel's heart towards the young culprit.

For

For an indigent youth, even under his patron's roof, to find all sense of obligation too weak to defend his heart from the charms of his heiress, was a situation in which he knew it was very possible honour might find itself; and he enquired with the tremor on his voice, if the young lady's affections were fixed on this designing youth.

"Not yet," and Sir Solomon devoutly thanked God; "but if he was not removed, — Yet he could not find in his heart to treat the ill judging boy with harshness; and what to do with him——"

Thus far had Sir Solomon proceeded like a skilful engineer, and was well prepared to go much farther; but the Colonel recollecting that in taking on himself the fortunes of a youth so dear to his friend, he should more engage his kindness to Rosa, as well as soothe the mind of a youth whose passions might be his ruin; and not doubting the truth of a syllable he heard, eagerly swallowed the bait, and offered to procure an appointment on the Bengal civil establishment, if Sir Solomon thought

thought the young man would consent to accept it.

“Accept it!” said the overjoyed Knight, “he must—he shall—he—if he do not, he—he——.” It was a happy and timely recollection, that Horace had hitherto obstinately rejected all the good things that had been offered him. “If—if I have any weight,—any——Ah Colonel! never, never can I repay this obligation,—but your little Rosa—yes, she shall be dear,—she——”

The Colonel interrupted what was intended to be a most moving speech, by a warm embrace.

The bargain was immediately struck: Horace Littleton must be a writer in the India Company’s service; his future welfare the Colonel made his own; and Rosa, the only dear object of her benefactor’s love, be to Sir Solomon,—what indeed was she not to be?—as dear as his own nieces, with whom indeed, so great was his attachment to her, he hinted she might possibly share his fortune; and so strongly did this intention seem to be taken up, that it required a
vast

vast deal of reasoning on the part of the Colonel to persuade the generous Knight such an arrangement would be not only unjust but unnecessary ; as he should make her his own sole and undoubted heiress. A second embrace, with feelings one party *could* not, and the other *would* not, give to words, sealed the compact.

Sir Solomon's next care was about the necessaries for so long a voyage. The Colonel, while he held Rosa on his knee, insisted that too should be his concern.

Sir Solomon could not bear such excess of generosity.

" Oh it was nothing,—a trifle to be repaid in sweatmeats to Rosa."

" Be it so," said the Knight, bowing with a look at Rosa worth a million in her patron's estimation. He then took leave, to inform Horace of his good fortune.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing the difference between parting with, and getting rid of a friend.

HORACE LITTLETON, when he received his patron's summons, to go for the first time to the metropolis, was reading the *Æneid* of Virgil. He coolly put the book in his pocket, stepped into the chaise, and was found by the Knight in his parlour, by the embers of a fire he was too much engaged or too indolent to stir; Virgil on the table, and without a trait of curiosity or interest, on his countenance, respecting the summons he had received.

Sir

Sir Solomon augured no good from an indifference that could not increase, and had not abated since his last great offer, to bind him apprentice to a corn-dealer at Ryegate; he however commenced his harangue in the usual flowery stile, that preceded every new scheme to get rid of his dear Horace.

Parental fondness, unbounded affection, grief of heart, kindness, and protection that should end but with life, were severally professed and enlarged on; then came the interest he had made, the trouble he had taken, the expence he had already been at, the sums it would yet cost; nothing indeed in comparison with the returns a genius like his might in a short time make.

Horace listened with the most frigid apathy, and as he marked the passage he was reading, before he closed the book, his lips severed to reply; but Sir Solomon, who at this moment dreaded nothing so much as an answer which he saw, by the turn of the young-man's countenance, would be unpropitious, desired him to come to his study early in
the

the morning, wished him a very good night, and abruptly left the room.

In the study, then, the next morning, Sir Solomon Mushroom waited the tardy approach of the youth, whom he had every hour since the "*very good-night*," at parting the evening before, consigned to perdition, but whom he now received with an appearance of placid affection.

Horace affected neither to thank, or be obliged by the profession and exertions of his paternal friend. A confused remembrance of solemn promises, which the host of heaven were adjured to witness, and which, like the sun-beam on the clear surface of the water vanished with that bright orb, had left him incredulous and resentful; his memory tenacious, and his sense of injury acute.

When Sir Solomon, after a repetition of all the fine things he said the night before,—after parenthesis within parenthesis, and circumlocutions without number, named the place of his destination, repugnant suspicion darted from the eyes of Horace, and he coldly but resolutely negatived the whole proposal.

The

The most consummate art and presence of mind were at this moment insufficient to calm the anger, or conceal the disappointment of the outrageous Knight.

Persuaded no man in the predicament of Horace Littleton, without friends, money, or even a home, if deprived of his, would refuse to go well accoutred to the Indies, to fill a lucrative post, if he were not sure to make a fortune with less trouble at home. *His interest, his fortune, his Charlotte, all, all, must be the goal of Horace's ambition.* It was too much; he gave way to fury; a torrent of invectives, upbraiding, and insults succeeded; and he at length demanded, in a voice of thunder, of the undaunted youth, if he expected to be maintained in idleness for ever?

The eyes of Horace flashed fire. "When you offer a choice, I ought to make a proposition I dare accept; you will find your maintenance and yourself are my scorn; misfortune may reduce me, but I will never degrade myself; nor by my own credulity sanction villany."

Sir

Sir Solomon Mushroom blushed in his turn; his large gray eye fell under the piercing black ones that darted into his very soul.

"Oh very, very fine! vastly fine!" said he; "sanction villany!—very well,—but I *know* you, Sir."

"'Tis well, Sir," replied Horace; "we are then on equal terms, for I *KNOW* YOU TOO."

Sir Solomon's red was no more; a ghastly pale overspread his rosy gills; his lips quivered; he trembled with something more direful than rage, and was advancing to strike the presumptuous youth, when the Colonel entered unannounced, with unusual alacrity in his looks, and was not more surprised at the apparent violence of his cool phlegmatic friend, than at the haughty indignant pale face, of the interesting young stranger.

Sir Solomon's features resumed their usual placidity with more ease than quite pleased the good Colonel, who, like the countryman in the fable, could neither comprehend or approve the art of blowing hot and cold
in

in one breath ; he however listened to the apology with complaisance and attention.

The Knight, after many solemn protestations of affection for the young man, adduced his inactive turn, and rejection of so great an offer, as the provocation to that excess of passion, he was ashamed his friend had witnessed.

“ He is partial, perhaps to his country,” said the Colonel, eyeing him with peculiar regard ; “ few young men leave Britain from choice ; but, Sir, if you would confide.”

There was an involuntary respect to the dignity of the young man’s deportment,—a sort of sympathetic tender regard to his orphan state, in the Colonel’s address, that dispelled the resentment which frowned on his brow, and left the usual sadness of expression in his countenance,

The Colonel observed a change, which he attributed to secret passion, and remembered Sir Solomon’s apprehension in regard to his niece ; he could not indeed look at Horace, and believe him a mercenary designer ; and
though

though he knew such things were, was more inclined to consider his rejection of an appointment really advantageous, as a proof, that young as he appeared, his heart was enslaved; and in this point of view he became more interesting, and more the object of his compassion.

“My good Sir,” said the Colonel, advancing, and taking the hand that seemed to hang lifeless to his inanimate form, “there is scarce a change in this variable life to which some feeling of the heart must not be sacrificed; time may reconcile you, as it has done me, to the most cruel destiny; learn of me what it is to suffer, and yet be a man, if you accept my protection.”

Horace started; he gazed at Colonel Buhanun, and at Sir Solomon Mushroom; he doubted his sense of hearing; looked wildly round; then his eyes, resting on the Colonel; “Your’s Sir! did you say your’s? your protection!”

“What is there, Sir,” answered the Colonel, coldly; “so terrific in *my* protection?”

tion? it has been often vainly asked, but never before refused."

Horace could not speak; the film that deadened his fine eye dispersed; he wiped the sweat from his forehead, knelt on one knee, his spread hand on his breast, and burst into tears.

"What's the matter now?" cried Sir Solomon peevishly.

The sympathizing Buhanun thought the poor youth was torn with hopeless love; he turned to Sir Solomon with an expression in his eye that implored pity; the eye of Sir Solomon answered a flat negative; he knew all things had their season, and remembered Rosa. "I am sorry, Sir," said he, addressing Horace, "you are so averse, but if—"

"Averse! averse! Sir," at length replied the agitated young man, "averse! ah great God! you know not, Sir, the heart that would glory in devoting all its faculties to the commands of Colonel Buhanun. Averse! what, to look up to a man of honour, of humanity, for favour and protection! alas! it was in despair of such happiness, that the
en-

enthusiastic ardour of youthful hope expired ; that I stood in sullen apathy, despising the miserable existence I languished to resign. Say, Sir, oh once more bless me with the sound ! say *you* are my protector. You spake of countries ; yes, this happy island may be dear to those who have kindred and inheritance ; but for me, wretched, forlorn, unallied, poor, and insulted, outcast from every tie that unite the happy relatives of society, that country is mine where it will be remembered, with all my wretchedness, I too have memory, have feeling, and am a man."

"What," stammered the Colonel, "this can't be—this must be all rant."

Horace looked no lying evidence.

"Well then," said the Colonel, "I have got a boy to my girl ; have I ? yes, I will be thy protector, thy father, and little Rosa shall be thy sister."

The emotions of Horace became too strong ; he was obliged to leave the room ; and the Colonel congratulated the Knight on the assurance, that his niece was not in so much danger as he had apprehended.

"An ungrateful villain!" exclaimed Sir Solomon, who knew from his own practices, how seldom appearances were to be trusted, and who was most severely humbled by the very conduct that insured the success of his scheme.

The rapture with which Horace changed his patron, if it did not prove him the ungrateful villain he called him, certainly did not say much for regret at changing one patron for another.

Had Colonel Buhanun been as deep in the secret springs of worldly actions, as he was in those of urbanity and honour, he would from this little incident have been, as the editor flatters herself some of her readers already are, rather uneasy about the guardianship of little Rosa; while others, that is to say, every handsome young man of eighteen, without sixpence in his pocket, will perhaps envy Horace Littleton.

Entire change of circumstance; the handsome manner in which he was equipped; and the distinction with which even Sir Solomon Mushroom now treated him, was the touchstone

stone of his strength of mind; he soon left the splendour of St. James'-square, and became a happy member of the Colonel's family.

Had Rosa been as ugly as Mrs. Feversham's report, and as ignorant as when her rags swept the path after the Colonel, her being simply his favourite, would have rendered her amiable and interesting to Horace.

But the truth is, she really was one of the most beautiful and engaging little creatures in the world; and as in the common intercourse between good sense, good nature, and innocence under one roof, affection will creep into the heart, whether one will or not, Horace first loved, and then trembled for little Rosa.

Sir Solomon Mushroom in this interval seemed to have but two points to carry; the first to make Colonel Buhanun believe all he said at present; and Horace to forget all he had either said or done in the past.

In the former he was wholly successful; but the latter was impossible; and among other things that perpetually recurred to the young man's recollection, were the opprobrious

epithets he had heard liberally and constantly bestowed by his late patron on the *dear little* Rosa, of whom he was now so fond.

The contempt in which he had avowedly held the benevolence that rescued her from beggary, was so striking a contrast to the adulative praises, which, as often as the subject occurred, flowed from lips Horace well knew was not in the practice of speaking truth that it both alarmed and distressed him.

Yet what could he do? just received into the favour and confidence of a man of honour, could he venture to reveal suspicions, which being but suspicion, might be doubted? Obligations he certainly did own to Sir Solomon Mushroom, and undesired as his confidence was, still all he could say was simply what had been trusted to him in that confidence; and it would require strong reasons as well as proofs, to convince one patron he betrayed the other, from motives of humanity.

'Tis true, his knowledge of the man warranted suspicion; he was certain, whatever
were

were the inducements, he was acting a part. But in order to render this as clear to others as it was to himself, they must know him as well, and that in the present instance was impossible.

Thus then poor Rosa was the object of Mr. Littleton's pity; and it was with an aching heart he was obliged to conceal his wish, rather to have her left without a guardian, than such a one as his late patron.

The tenderness to which she was now enured, had obliterated all traces of her miserable origin; and though infantine recollections could not wound her mind, as they had often done his, yet harsh treatment or neglect would now be more hard to bear, than if the fortunate reverse in her situation had never taken place. Such were the reflections of Horace, whenever the fondness of Sir Solomon reminded him of the undressed part of his character.

But a busy scene awaited him, which allowed little time for observation; the ship in which they were to embark for India, had fallen down to Gravesend, and was hourly expected

to sail for the Downs, where the Colonel and his suite proposed to join her; and as he could not presume to drop a hint of his suspicions, without incurring the censure of officiousness, and probably ingratitude, as well as wounding the peace, and breaking the confidence of his patron, at a time when he might change without bettering the situation of Rosa, he abandoned the idea, and employed himself in arranging his own and the Colonel's affairs.

John, whose hands and heart were also full, had leisure nevertheless to do a good natured action; and remembering James, Captain Macpherson's servant, mentioned him with such praise to Mr. Littleton, that he sent to inquire for him, but Buchan was engaged.

John could not say he was sorry, on Buchan's account, because a servant, let him be as good as he will, or as he should, can have but one place at a time; but he was very sorry Mr. Littleton missed him, because he was as honest as the day.

As the time advanced for parting, and perhaps for ever, the bond of kindness seemed more closely knit between the four hearts that formed Colonel Buhanun's household, namely the Colonel and Rosa, and John and Betty. Rosa was seldom off the Colonel's knee in the parlour, and Betty as seldom off that of John in the outer room.

The Colonel had been in close consultation with Rosa about her dolls three hours, when he rang for a glass of water, and John, who had been the same exact time hearing Betty's lamentations, heaved a deep sigh as he set down the water.

"Friend John," said the Colonel, "the only consolation I had long known, before I picked up my little Rosa, was thy fidelity; thou hast a heart, worthy him who gave it."

John bowed; he pulled up his plaited chitterlin, and gave his arm a preparative flourish, but a thought of Betty put Shakespeare out of his head, and having been lately much afflicted with the salt rheum, drew his left hand across his eye, and dropt the right.

"This dear little deserted animal, was thrown in my way by Providence."

"I dare say she was, your honour, on purpose to be saved from destruction."

"Say rather, friend John, to save me from destruction."

The Colonel was more in habits of friendship than familiarity with his servant; he had never but once before unbended, even to John, who now stood scarce breathing, lest he should disturb the solemnity of his master's speech and features.

"Ah John! thou knowest not how the black poison has engendered within me."

"Poison!" exclaimed John, "now God, of his infinite mercy, forbid."

A melancholy smile passed over the Colonel's features.

"Returning health; what had it for me, but a lengthened term of misery; I have no friends, no country."

"Please your honour," (John's voice was raised; his crest elevated; he stood erect, and looked as if he meant to be a comforter in the hour of need) "please your honour,
you

you are a Scotsman, and no country in the Christian land has so many friends as Scotsmen, because right or wrong, they are sure to stand by one another; our regiment, nineteen out of every twenty, were Scotsmen, and I never heard one of them speak ill of his own country."

The intended eulogium on Scotland and Scotsmen were lost on the Colonel; his eyes filled with tears were raised to heaven.

"Oh my father! my dear respected parent! why, oh why didst thou plant a dagger in the heart of thy son?"

Saving the Shakespeare treasure, and a string of good old proverbs, there could not be a more literal understanding than that of our friend John.

"A dagger!" he repeated, "why what a sinful world is this! a father stick a dagger in his son! his own son!"

"—— The father of so blest a son;

"A son who is the theme of honour's tongue;

"Amongst the grove the very straightest plant."

The Colonel wiped off the drops of anguish, that distilling from his heart stood on his haggard brow.

"This child," said he; "this poor child! untaught and miserable as I found her, has such an indescribable fascination about her, such power over my senses, that while I trace her features, observe the opening traits of her mind, and listen to her innocent prattle, I feel, I know not what of painful pleasure; the misery that had so long grown to every aching sense is no more; the past, the present, and the future, are all lost in the delirium of the moment; but that d——d Doctor——"

"Oh fye!" cried Rosa, clapping her hand to his mouth, "have I not bid you leave off naughty words? and did you not promise you would?"

The little hand was pressed to his lips.

"Yes, that puny Doctor awoke me from a pleasing torpor, by simply suggesting, that when I am gone to my duty, poor little Rosa." The tremor on his voice never was
more

more troublesome, and the rheum overflowed from his eyes. "Poor little Rosa may again become friendless."

"Very true, your honour," answered John sorrowfully, "and perhaps her wicked mother may return, and take her."

"I'll be d——d if she shall, friend John."

Rosa's hand was again on his lips, and pressed with increased tenderness."

"The fortune I possess has been honourably accumulated."

"Your honour never got a dirty shilling in your life."

"My nearest of kin is my lawful heir; and to his honour I knew I might consign thee; but this child has changed my ideas; I will make a will; I shall still take care of thee."

John drew the back of his hand across his eyes.

"Your honour has always done that."

"Thou hast the two letters I gave thee directed to Major Buhanun."

"Safe in my box, your honour."

"I

"I will write my own will, which, when done, thou may destroy the letters, or keep them as thou likest."

John affected to recover his spirits; he desired his master would not doubt he would at the hazzard of his life obey him; and as to me, your honour, he added,

"I am a true labourer—I earn that I eat—get that I wear—owe no man hate—envy no man's happiness—glad of other men's good—content with my harm, and the greatest of my pride is"

to live and die with so good a master."

The Colonel cast a look of kindness at his servant, and dipped his pen in the inkstand before him.

"Men," continued John,

"——— Men must endure

"Their going hence, even as their coming hither,

"Ripeness is all."

And what is life

"—— But a walking shadow, a poor player,

"That struts and frets his hour on the stage,

"And then is heard no more."

John

John was never more in grace with himself; never more happy in the appropriate motion of his right arm; nor were his feelings ever more in unison with Shakespeare; he had half a dozen more quotations ready to pour in upon the subject, and was in attitude to proceed, when the Colonel, drawing his writing table nearer, mildly dismissed both him and Rosa.

“He is making his will,” said Betty, the moment she saw John, “and I really think Mr. John, it would have been but doing as you would be done by, had you just put in a word for me; I dare say he won’t live the year out.”

“God forbid! Mrs. Betty,” replied John.

“Nay, Mr. John, I am very far from wishing my master ill, but only as he is such a poor shadow of a man, and as he was talking about making a will.”

John never thought of the how Mrs. Betty came by her intelligence; her sagacity was the only thing that struck him in the business, which he had reason to admire still more

more on being rung for by the Colonel, and bid to write his name directly under that of the landlord, to his last will and testament, which was signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of both the subscribing witnesses.

After this important transaction Colonel Buhanun became more chearful and more apparently fond of Rosa.

Sir Solomon had been so kind as to make the arrangements for Rosa's reception at a very reputable boarding-school in the neighbourhood of Penry, where he assured the Colonel, that as he should himself be dumb on the subject, as the child was so much altered, and as by his direction her name was changed, it would be impossible she could be recognised as the little beggar. As this was a point on which the Colonel was extremely delicate, the Knight spared neither argument nor pains to make him easy, and in the end entirely succeeded.

But though it would doubtless have been a satisfaction to the Colonel, to have seen the child settled at school, he could not prevail on himself to forego the greater pleasure of keep-
ing

ing her with him to the last moment; and during the short time that now remained of his stay, his whole attention was engrossed by little Rosa.

The day at length arrived when the purser gave notice of having received the last dispatches and of his immediate departure, when the wind being fair, the ship must certainly sail; and post chaises were ordered by the next morning's dawn; one for the Colonel and his servant, another for Mr. Horace Littleton and the persevering Sir Solomon Mushroom, who insisted on accompanying his two dear friends, as long as they remained on British ground; and to avoid any delay, both him and Horace ordered beds at the hotel.

When the cloth was laying for supper, who should gravely walk up to the side board, in a new suit of the Colonel's undress livery but James Buchan.

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us," stammered John, dropping a tumbler out of his right hand.

"Before the supper is served," said the Colonel, gravely, "give me thy hand, friend John,—thou art no longer my servant."

From

From the time Colonel Buhanun had been so unexpected a witness of the tragical scene between John and Mrs. Betty, he had spoke less frequently than usual to the former, but as his kindness to the latter had increased in double proportion; and as it was not Mr. John but Mrs. Betty's Lynx eye, that was always on the gaze when interest was at stake, the alteration had not till this tremendous moment occurred to him; but unconscious of a thought in which affection was not blended with duty, and hurt at the apparent treachery of his friend, his heart was too big for the breast of a common soldier.

"Please your honour, you may turn me away," said he, "but you can't discharge me the regiment without a court martial. John Brown was never the man yet that showed his back to the corporal, or flinched from his duty, and if I—if I do leave——"

Here John's rhetoric stuck; here the big heart overflowed; he fell on his knees, wrung his hands, and wept like a child.

"Rise, my good fellow," said the Colonel; "yes, I repeat you are no longer my servant,

servant,—but you are, and shall always be one of my most valued friends.”

“ But, oh my honoured Colonel,” with an emphasis on the Colonel, “ why am I discharged? what have I done? If I have neglected duty, or disobeyed orders, punish me, turn me into the ranks, do any thing, kill me, so I am in your service, I shall die contented.

After a pause, during which Sir Solomon turned himself full round, to lose no iota of what was passing, and Mr. Horace precipitately left the room, he added fobbing,

“ If I depart from thee, I cannot live;

“ And in thy sight to die, what were it

“ But a pleasant slumber.”

“ You affect me, John,” said the Colonel, “ and I am already sick at heart. Couldst thou think, after the scene I witnessed with that worthy girl thou lovest, I would prefer my own convenience to thy happiness, and take thee from her? no, thou shalt marry her.”

“ Marriage,

"Marriage, and please your honour," replied John, in a sullen unthankful tone, "is an awful undertaking; if a man takes a voyage to India, why he knows the end of his hardships setting case he should meet with a few storms, why he either gets into good quarters at last, or dies like a man, and so is easy one way or other; but as to marriage——"

"Why, John," joined Sir Solomon, "how would pretty Mrs. Betty relish those strong arguments against marriage?"

"'Tis an honour——"
she

"——dreams not of,"
replied John, in forte, and then with pitiful looks was going to offer more reasons, "why a voyage to India was all to nothing a better venture than marriage;" when the Colonel stopped him short.

"Thy arguments, John," said he, "will never make converts, because they are against thine own conviction."

"I can't deny my love for Mrs. Betty, your honour; but neither can I leave my commander; your honour's own words, when you were minded to aide with Miss Rosa, were,

were, "a foldier should not lye by when his comrades are facing the enemy," like

"——— Cowards living,

"To die with lengthened shame."

Now, please your honour, every one that can pull a trigger, tells for one; and though your honour knows, and every body knows, a hundred privates won't make up for one commissioned officer, especially in that sweltering place, where we so often faced powder; yet I am sure my noble Colonel would not wish John Brown be to off his post, when he should be obeying the word of command."

"Sit down, my friend," said the Colonel, taking his hand, "and hear how thou mayst do me the best service; how thou mayst make thy master happy, and yet do thy duty."

"That," answered John sullenly, "may be soon settled; it is one and the same thing."

"In the first place, there is thy discharge from the regiment."

John

John sobbed, and his hand involuntarily retreated.

“ In the next, thou knowest my foolish fondness for this little child.”

“ God bless her heart, and your honour’s heart, for being so good to her, poor dear, she is worth it.”

“ Well, thou knowest I cannot take her with me.”

Sir Solomon now made another change in his position, to lose no iota that fell from the Colonel.

“ Why, no, to be sure,” said John, “ your honour can’t do that ; taking a child to India, is carrying coals to Newcastle.”

“ Sir Solomon Mushroom promises to be a father to her.”

Sir Solomon bowed.

“ I wish he may keep his word, your honour.”

Sir Solomon’s red cheeks turned blue.

“ I do not doubt it,” replied the Colonel.

Again Sir Solomon bowed, he hoped not.

“ But

"But Sir Solomon is not immortal."

"No, God forbid, your honour."

"He may die."

Sir Solomon was again ready to hope not.

"To be sure your honour, the young may go, but the old must;

"Seeing that death, a necessary end, will come when it will come."

"And who will be a father to my Rosa, then?"

"As I told your honour before, there's Mrs. Betty, a sober, honest, true hearted, staid young body."

"True, friend John; but Betty, poor Betty! who will take care of her? if she has no husband, she will want a father herself."

John sobbed aloud.

"And then, poor girl, she has fits."

"She'll be broke of that, your honour; she thinks if she was settled, and had a home."

"I

" I dare say she would; and then my little Rosa would never want one."

" I'd be d——d if she should!"

As this is the first time John has made an immoral slip, although he had the advantage of such constant example, good folks will forgive him.

" Well then, the sum of the matter is this: Rosa must have a home, and Betty a husband."

" She will as soon expect to fly in the air, or as I did your honour would turn away an old servant."

" Do not harass me, friend John," said the Colonel, in a most affectionate manner, " with thy grateful fidelity; I do not turn thee away, I only change the nature of thy service; I appoint you and your wife guardians under the direction of Sir Solomon Mushroom, of this my adopted child."

" Fine talking about guardians and marriage, and this, and that, and t'other, but who is to take care of your honour, when your bile returns? Oh Colonel! you'll think of poor John, mind I say it."

" I

“ I shall always think of poor John ; but if I do not go away easy in my mind about this child, the bile will not only return, but kill me ; therefore say no more about it ; get married as soon as you can ; here is something to begin the world with ; if that be not enough to put you into a decent situation, Sir Solomon will have the goodness to make what addition you may require. Your chests are all unshipped and brought back ; so God bless thee, my good fellow ; thou shalt find I never can turn thee off, as thou call’st it ; go make thy good girl happy, and attend me after supper ; Buchan shall wait.”

“ *Go make thy girl happy !*” Was it in nature, after seeing Buchan enter in the Colonel’s livery ; after the doors were all closed, when every body was engaged, that a key-hole could remain unoccupied while Mrs. Betty had an ear ?

All that was wanting to make Betty happy, when John’s sorrowful phiz came in contact with her keen eye, was to know the exact and specific value of the bit of paper he still held crumpled in his hand, which she understood

was designed to settle a home for John's good girl and Miss Rosa; he however had forgot every tittle of the business, except his discharge; he held the paper indeed in his unconscious hand, but was totally uninterested in its value.

The flappers of Laputa could not be more dexterous in recalling the disciples of profound study to their occupation, than Mrs. Betty at recollection, where dear self-interest was at stake; the "How much is it?" which non-plused poor John at the beginning of a very affecting detail of what had passed between him and his master, proved a seasonable relief to both; Betty was out of her wits for joy, and John stupified with grief, as they with difficulty spelled a bank note for two hundred pounds.

"Well, God blefs his dear generous heart, and send him safe back to old England, say I," quoth Mrs. Betty.

"Amen, amen, pray God, amen," joined John.

"May he live

"Longer than I have time to tell his years;

"Ever beloved and loving may his rule be;

"And when old time shall take him hence,

"Goodness and he fill up one monument."

"Ay,

“ Ay, if he lives to come back, and have a Christian burial ; for I dare say there are no monuments at Ingee ; however I hope he’ll let me pay my dooty before he goes, and I’ll warrant I’ll take care of Miss Rosa. I shall never forget the time when I spoiled a new pair of Salisbury scissars by cutting off her nasty hair.”

Betty had scarce spoke when her master’s bell rung, and she was ordered up with John.

The Colonel prefaced his commands by a gift of all the valuable little necessaries which people of elegant ideas, though in furnished lodgings, will rather purchase than become familiar with more ordinary accommodation.

Betty courtesied to the ground, and ran over in her mind the tea, coffee, and milk pot, casters, spoons, writing stand, candlesticks, &c. of silver ; then her mind’s eye was dazzled by china, decanters, rummers, and goblets, of the finest cut glass ; and to these succeeded a large quantity of fine table and bed linen.

John, on his knees, pressed his master's hand, and then, unable to speak, ran out of the room.

The Colonel solemnly recommended Rosa to the care and affection of the delighted Betty; he charged her to make a wife worthy the honestest fellow in the world; and feeling himself unable to proceed, wished her happy, and motioned for her to retire.

Again Betty courtesied to the ground; but having reached the door, stopped short: "All the things,—did your honour say, *all?*?"

The Colonel had perhaps for the last time seen the affectionate domestic, who had been his only comforter many a sad and dreary hour; his heart was too full to remark the very opposite virtues of his intended wife; ashamed of the tears that would roll unbidden down his cheeks, he could only say, "Every thing; go, woman, God bless you!" And away tripped Mrs. Betty.

The feelings of the Colonel were at this moment so acute, that he formed a sudden resolution to shorten the pains of separation. He really dreaded again seeing his faithful
servant,

servant, and therefore communicated his design to Sir Solomon Mushroom and Horace, each of whom, from different motives, approved the idea; and Sir Solomon himself went to order the chaises to the door immediately, instead of day break, while the Colonel retired to write a farewell to John; put down some memorandums respecting Rosa; and hang over the sleeping object of his love and charity, in fondness and agony unutterable; he kissed her lips, eyes, and cheeks, with paternal fervor; bathed them with tears; then rushed into the room where Sir Solomon was returned, and had been *not giving*, but *receiving*, a lecture from Horace Littleton.

“We may not, Sir,” said the Colonel, after solemnly embracing the Knight, “have a moment for conversation, when we leave the carriage; I therefore once more recommend to you an infant, to whom God has given a claim on your humanity. This is my will; it is duly executed; I have adopted Rosa, and left her my sole heiress, with the exception of very few legacies; if I die without

out again seeing her, let her know, she inherits the fortune of a man to whose soul she is dear; one who, having never broken his own word given to man or woman, suspects not that in others, he would not dare to be guilty of himself; in that principle he rests with entire confidence on the integrity, the honour, and the reiterated promises you have made. The engagement we have entered into is not merely between man and man; it is a compact before heaven; the object of it is an innocent child, on whom the Almighty has stamped his own most perfect image; *he* sees our motive, *he* approves our act; we have adjured *him* to witness both; and as you act towards my poor Rosa, the child of my love, may *he* bless or curse."

The marking brow of Horace was contracted, his under lip fell, he repeated, looking sternly at Sir Solomon, "Bless or curse you."

Sir Solomon echoed the A, in piano; but ashamed, no doubt, of his want of something or other, added the "men," in a higher key; and

and then, in grand forte, and appropriate solemnity, gave the "Amen, amen."

The Colonel rushed to his chaise; Buchan was ready; Horace and Sir Solomon followed in theirs; the drivers had previous orders; they seemed to tear up the pavement; in one minute the kind, the charitable benefactor; the most sincere and candid of friends; the best and most generous of masters, was no more seen or heard.

END OF VOL. I.